LIBRARY OF PRINCETON
OCT 8 – 1928
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

BV 1475 .W663 1928
Wilson, Dorothy Frances.
Child psychology and
religious education

Sup. 122

CHILD PSYCHOLOGY AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

CHILD PSYCHOLOGY

AND

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

A BOOK FOR PARENTS AND TEACHERS

LIBRARY OF PRINCETON
OCT 8 - 1928
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

BY

DOROTHY F. WILSON

B.LITT. (OXON)

DIPLOMA IN THEOLOGY (OXON); CERTIFICATE OF WESTHILL TRAINING COLLEGE; ASSISTANT MINISTER AT CARR'S LANE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, BIRMINGHAM; LATELY YOUNG PEOPLE'S SECRETARY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF ENGLAND

WITH A PREFACE BY

CANON B. H. STREETER

Garden City, New York

DOUBLEDAY, DORAN & COMPANY, INC.

1928

TO MY FRIENDS OF THE
MANSFIELD COLLEGE J.C.R.
OXFORD

PREFACE

I FIRST read this book not of choice but of necessity. It was submitted as a thesis for a Research Degree and I was an examiner ; and I hate examining. To my agreeable surprise I found it extremely readable as well as being, so far as I could judge, very sound in its statement of facts and conclusions. Indeed, it struck me as the best thing of its size that I had happened upon in this particular subject ; so I urged the author to revise it for publication, and suggested she should offer it to the Student Movement. Quite a lot of readers, I fancy, will be grateful to me for having done so.

B. H. STREETER.

CONTENTS

PAGE

INTRODUCTION 13

Education and its Purpose. Religious Education. The two Main Aspects of Education. Psychology and Education.

I. THE RELIGION OF CHILDREN . . . 20

Methods of Study: (1) Observation, (2) Questionnaire, (3) Memory. Some Popular Misconceptions of Children's Religion and Character: (*a*) Original Sin, (*b*) "Trailing Clouds of Glory." Affinities with Primitive Religion: Suggestion and Tradition, Animism, Fetichism, Myth-making, Anthropomorphism, Ritual.

II. SUGGESTION AND IMITATION 33

The Importance of Infancy. Suggestion: its Nature, Physiological Suggestion, Negativism, Mental Suggestion, Necessity for Outgrowing it. Suggestion in Religious Education; Instances in very Early Infancy, in Early Childhood, Unconscious Suggestion. Imitation: its Connexion with Suggestion, its Rise, its Value to the Child, Summary of Imitative Activities of Children, their Social Value, Relation to Originality, Value of Imitation in Religious Education.

III. THE USE OF THE IMAGINATION . . . 45

Imagery and Imagination. A Characteristic of Childhood. Its Relation to Children's "Lying." Danger of Phantasy; Montessori and Fairy-tales. Value of Imagination: (*a*) To the Individual, (*b*) To Society, (*c*) In Religion. Training the Imagination: Observation, Visualization, Curiosity, Stories, Play and Dramatization.

CONTENTS

PAGE

IV. The Child's Fears and his Idea of God . 57

Fear as a Characteristic of Childhood. Instinctive Fears. Imaginary Fears. Value of Fear. Its Dangers. How to Deal with the Child's Fears. Fear and Religion: the Idea of God.

V. Authority and Obedience 66

Authority *versus* Freedom. The Place of Authority in Education. Conditions of its Successful Use. The Child's Reaction to it. Obedience. Disobedience and Punishment.

VI. The Child's Freedom 77

Freedom to Grow. Its Relation to Authority. Curiosity. Doubt. The Dawn of Reason in Religion. Attention and Interest. The Child's Self-expression.

VII. Training the Memory in Religious Education 90

Bergson's Two Types of Memory: (*a*) Pure Memory, (*b*) Habit Memory. Laws Governing Impression: Lack of Fatigue, Primacy, Emotional State, Interest, Understanding, Visual and Auditory Memory, Presentation as a Whole. Retention: Forgetting, Repetition and Revision. Reproduction: the Law of Association, Configuration, Purpose. The Place of Memory in Religious Education.

VIII. Training in Morality 101

Its Place in Christian Education. The Raw Material of Morality. Desire for Approval. Anti-social Conduct in Childhood: Anger, Cruelty, Lying, Selfishness. The Self-regarding Sentiment and Prudential Morality. Altruism. Missionary Education. The Inner Demand: the Voice of God. The Will. The Grace of God.

CONTENTS

PAGE

IX. Training in Worship 117

The Child's Need for Worship. The Test of Sincerity. Appreciation of Beauty and the Worshipping Response to it. Expression of Worship: Praise, Prayer, Life Itself.

X. Love and Hero-Worship 127

The Nature of Love: its Origin. Expressions of Affection. Training the Affections. Love of God. Hero-worship.

XI. Religion and Children's Life-Experiences . 135

Experience as a Teacher. The Project-principle in Religious Education. Real Life-situations: (*a*) Birth and Sex, (*b*) Death, (*c*) Conversion.

XII. General Conclusion and Summary . . 148

Periods of Child-life: Infancy, Early Childhood, Middle Childhood, Later Childhood.

CHILD PSYCHOLOGY AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

EDUCATION IN THE LIGHT OF PSYCHOLOGY

Few words are more difficult to define than the word " education." One may read book after book on the subject and find no two definitions which agree.[1] Yet the question cannot be ignored, although it is hardly likely that any given definition will satisfy everybody, for a man's idea of the function of education is necessarily determined by his conception of the meaning of life itself.

One of the most popular definitions of education at the present time, and one containing a large measure of truth is that it is " preparation for life." That this definition is in itself insufficient, however, will be realized by anyone who sets himself to imagine how differently it would be interpreted by an Arab sheikh, a Bolshevist in Moscow, an American company-promoter and a Colonel in the Guards.

[1] Cf. Sir Auckland Geddes' words to the Minnesota Educational Association in 1920: " What is education ? Let me assure you that I find the answer extraordinarily difficult. I have tried for years to answer it; I have read deeply and widely on the subject, but I am not satisfied that I have yet found an answer."

Herbert Spencer carried the matter further when he said that " To prepare us for *complete* living is the function which education has to discharge." [1] For this " complete living " Dr Crichton Miller has distinguished three adjustments which the child must make before he can attain it; the adjustment to society, the adjustment to the mate (actual or potential), and the adjustment to the Infinite.[2] If the true function of education is an attempt to assist the development of an immature human being towards a complete life, it must definitely set out to help him to make these three adjustments. Although they must necessarily overlap, and no one can be considered entirely alone, it is my purpose in this thesis to deal mainly with the third, the adjustment to the Infinite. In doing this I cannot distinguish sharply between " religious " and so-called " secular " education. If religion itself were merely a matter of special days and times and ceremonies, practised only by professionals, then religious education might be a thing apart ; but in a day when religion takes all life for its province, religious education can do no less. It is insight into this truth which has made the problem of religious education so much more difficult and complex within late years. In the days when religion was supposed to consist in believing correct religious doctrines, the problem of religious education was much simpler; instruction in catechisms or creeds was thought to be sufficient. To those who held

[1] *Education* (New York, 1892).

[2] See *The New Psychology and the Teacher*, p. 33.

that " The Bible is the religion of Protestants " the question was hardly more difficult; children were taught texts, Bible passages and stories and doctrines based on them, the habit of Bible-reading was encouraged, and religious education had done its work. To-day it can aim at nothing less than a religious adjustment to the whole of life. While so-called " secular education " may seek to lead the child to adjustment to a progressive environment, and ethical education lead him to right relationships with his fellows, religious education will try to give him a philosophy and a motive-power which will make both these adjustments possible, by leading him into a right relationship with the ultimate ground of his being. It is the " adjustment to the Infinite," of which Dr Crichton Miller speaks:

" The third adjustment which has to be made is the adjustment to the Infinite. It is useless for a person to consider himself adult while he is still pretending to himself and to the world that he does not know whether there is a God, and is indifferent on the subject. He is far from maturity if he does not know himself well enough to realize that he has got to settle in his own mind his own view of the Infinite and to adjust himself to it. Nor is his adjustment adequately made if he carries through life a conception founded primarily on childish experience; the conception of a God who is identified either with the severity or with the indulgence of his parents." [1] Throughout this essay then, the aim of religious education will be understood as the

[1] *The New Psychology and the Teacher*, pp. 80, 81.

effort to help the child to make this third adjustment in such a way that it will control his adjustment in other ways to life as a whole.

There have always been two main aspects or methods of education, although it is only within recent years that these have been recognized and stated. These are:

(*a*) The development and growing control and expression of the child's own powers.
(*b*) The transmission of the heritage of racial experience and wisdom.

When one of these sides is emphasized to the exclusion of the other, education becomes one-sided, and character stunted or warped. The former side was almost completely ignored before the days of Rousseau, the latter tends to be overlooked in some of the more daring educational experiments of to-day. Norman MacMunn, in *The Child's Path to Freedom*, describes the three ages of education as :

(1) *The Age of Repression.*—When " children must be seen and not heard "; when they were passive recipients of instruction.

(2) *The Age of Impression.*—When the teacher's main task was to stamp his own image on his pupils, and to turn out so many lesser copies of himself; this age reaching its highest point in Arnold of Rugby.

(3) *The Age of Expression.*—When the teacher seeks only to guide and assist the development and unfolding of the child's own personality.

Ages (1) and (2) were the ages of instruction, Age (3) is the age of training. While we cannot train without instructing, instruction is but a small part of training, which Professor Ward defines as "directed growth."

Psychology as a science is yet in its infancy, but it is old enough already to have had a very great effect on education, and few teachers who take their vocation seriously would willingly be entirely ignorant of it. What help can the teacher expect from psychology in his task of religious education?

Take first the instructional side of the task, the transmission of the racial heritage of experience and wisdom. Through prolonged experience of life and reflection upon it, through gradual and progressive revelations of God to men, through the supreme revelation in Jesus Christ, through men's experience of His presence and help, and through reflection upon that, a racial heritage has been built up which no individual could hope to acquire unaided in the course of the longest lifetime. On the truth of these ideas and institutions psychology is not competent to make a pronouncement. That is outside her province. But where she *can* help in this side of education is by helping the teacher to understand the laws of the growing mind, which govern the assimilation and expression of new ideas.

It is, however, on the other side of education, the development and growing control of the child's own powers, that psychology comes to her own. She helps towards an understanding of the instincts and

inborn energies which are the raw material of character and religion, and of those steps which should be taken to secure a normal development of the faculties concerned with religion. She gives an insight into the mischief caused by the forcing process, by the attempt to superimpose an adult religious experience upon the child's own immature religious life. She enables the teacher to approach this with reverence, to understand that the child, as well as the man, is *capax dei*. In order to secure the normal development of these faculties concerned with religion, psychologists must study the natural order in which they manifest themselves. To ignore this is to violate the laws of developing life, where religion shows "first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear." The children's interests are the guides here. In this essay it will be necessary, then, to study these faculties and interests in detail. Here it is important to bear in mind that when one studies these separately, it is for purposes of study only, and not because they exist as separate entities in the child's life. The old-fashioned "faculty-psychology," which divided the child into a heart, intellect, will, etc., is dead. The whole child is at work in each of his activities. But as a linguist may get a better understanding of language by dividing it into parts of speech and studying the grammar, so the teacher may study different aspects of child-life, always remembering that the distinctions exist for the observer only, and not objectively in the mind and life of the child.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

As " Child Psychology and Religious Education " is the subject of this essay, and as childhood is normally understood to end, and adolescence to begin, at about twelve years old, the study will only deal with the religious education of children up to that age.

I

THE RELIGION OF CHILDREN

The study of the psychology of childhood, and especially of childhood's religion, is a difficult and delicate one: difficult because those who make the study are adults and find it hard to look into the child-mind, or to look at other things with the child-mind; delicate because it is so easy to lay coarse and heavy hands on these tender lives, "to offend one of these little ones." Yet the genetic interest of modern science insists more and more on a really scientific study of childhood, and the study of religion is no exception in this respect.

There are several methods of studying the religion of children which may be used: (1) There is the method of careful observation, especially if the children are unconscious of it. The trouble here is that the observer will generally interpret what he sees through his own adult experience, and will see what he wishes to see. He will consider the child as a little man and nothing is more misleading. The child's mental activities differ from the adult's not only in quantity but also in quality. The observer must try to observe scientifically, too; he must beware of viewing the children through the golden mists of romance and poetry or the distorting glass of humour.

(2) Then there is the favourite American method of the questionnaire. There is no doubt that this method has given some very useful and illuminating results in the study of child psychology, but again caution is necessary. So often the children do not comprehend the real drift of the question, their powers of self-expression are very limited, they are often very shy of telling their innermost thoughts and feelings.

(3) Another source of inquiry is into the memories of one's own childhood, those of friends, and those reported in books. This will help a great deal, but again is not a perfectly trustworthy method. Memories are apt to mislead; they are interpreted also through the adult mind. Professor Adams recommends the method of reverie, setting down the results on a sheet of paper and then getting it checked by older female relatives![1] It is possible that psycho-analysis may have a big contribution to make here.

In trying to understand the religion of children the psychologist will make use of all these methods, but will use them with due caution, and will resist the temptation to put too high a value upon an insufficient number of facts. I shall try to take this attitude throughout this essay.

There are two popular misconceptions of children's religious nature which must be referred to at the outset. One, the conception of childhood's total depravity, or at any rate of its original sin, has had an honoured place in theological thought since the

[1] *Primer on Teaching*, p. 10.

time of St Augustine; and many parents or teachers who have observed the cruelty, wilfulness, greed and anger of children have been tempted to subscribe to it. St Augustine, speaking of his own boyhood, said frankly: "For before Thee none is free from sin, not even the infant which has lived but a day upon the earth." He then goes on to recall his "sin" in crying for the breast, and to tell of his own observation of an infant too young to speak, who through jealousy "became pale and cast bitter looks on its foster-brother." [1] This estimate of St Augustine went largely unchallenged by the Church for several centuries. One preacher of long ago even asserted, "There are infants of a span long in hell." Every infant was tainted by this *damnosa hereditas*. Parents might watch their children with fear and trembling for signs that they were among the redeemed "elect"; they could hardly try to nurture or develop a religious life which was held to be non-existent. The science of evolution and the better understanding of the nature of the early stories of Genesis have delivered man's thought of childhood from this pernicious doctrine. As F. R. Tennant has pointed out: "The term 'sin,' and its derivatives, can surely only be applied to the issues of the *will*. . . . We conclude, then, that in its earliest period the child's life is wholly innocent of actual sin or inborn sinfulness. Its appetites are blind, rather of the nature of wants than of conscious desires; action is not purposive, even when adaptive, but simply an automatic response to stimulus, and

[1] *Confessions*, Bk. I., chap. vii.

is therefore non-moral. . . . Without law there is no sin, only ignorance. In other words, sin becomes first a possibility when the child has acquired moral personality."[1]

The doctrine of childish depravity has lately come to life again in another form, in the infantile sexuality theories of Freud, who gives instances of it in the child's showing-off (exhibitionism), cruelty (sadism), curiosity and stealing. In reading Freud's interpretation of childhood it is difficult not to see in it the result of his obsession for tracing everything back to the one cause of sex.

In startling contrast to these low estimates of childhood is that immortalized by Wordsworth:

> But trailing clouds of glory do we come
> From God, who is our home:
> Heaven lies about us in our infancy![2]

Rousseau believed that the child came perfect and flawless from his Maker's hand. Pestalozzi believed that religion was a primary constituent of the child's nature. Froebel, in his book *The Education of Man*, based his whole educational philosophy on the belief that all nature is religious. These men have been followed by many since their times in sitting reverently at the feet of infancy, watching and learning. "The secret of education lies in respecting the child," said Emerson. This may be accepted without going all the way with Rousseau in his belief in the child's flawless perfection. We may love the child's simplicity, sincerity, trustfulness, spontaneity,

[1] *The Child and Religion*, pp. 154-184.
[2] *Ode on Immortality*.

as our Lord did, and yet not be blind to the fact that in many ways he is just a healthy little animal, largely guided by his instincts. These are not "good" and "bad" in themselves, though they may be "higher" and "lower." The work of religious education is to strengthen the higher impulses and to help the child to gain control over the lower ones, so that he may live a life useful to himself, to the community, and to God.

One great characteristic of the religion of children, which is now recognized on all sides, and which can hardly be seriously controverted, is its affinity with primitive religion. This is known as "the recapitulation theory," the child repeats in general outline the history of the race. In turn he is savage, barbarian and civilized human being. Advocates of the theory point out that the human embryo passes through the various forms of different embryos of ascending animal-life; at one stage the human embryo has gills like a fish, and so on. Later, in boys of nine or ten years of age, they point to the adventures, love of hunting and fighting games, as recapitulation of early tribal life. Baden-Powell's genius has made this the basis of his Scout Movement, and he defends it thus: "The romance of the ritual, the patrol emblems and calls may appear to us respectable middle-aged and over-civilized persons as 'all tosh.' But to the boy they appeal; and what is more, they have an educational value in the hands of those who know how to use them. They are natural, if primitive, notions which apply not only to our British boys but are universal in one form or another

among the boyhood of every race and tribe." [1] This theory helps us to find a new meaning in many of the spontaneous interests of boys and girls, and to view with more hopefulness and less distress such things as childish anger or pugnacity, which we now expect to fill their purpose in the child's development and then to be outgrown. Two extreme and misguided inferences from this theory must be guarded against. One is the idea that all these recapitulatory traits are *merely* recapitulatory, and so useless to the individual; whereas a sound case may be made out for their real usefulness to him in the different stages of his development,[2] and in the ultimate perfection of his mature organism. The other false inference is that the "racial push" will be sufficient to carry the child through all these stages, apart from environment and training. But if of two children of the same parents, one were brought up in cultured and civilized society and the other by a savage tribe, the racial push would not lift one child to the level of the other.[3]

In the sphere of religious ideas and practice the recapitulation theory is strikingly exemplified. Some of the affinities between the religion of children and that of primitive peoples will now be considered.

In both, religion is very largely the result of tradition, environment, suggestion and imitation. "But behind them there lies something which, though they may shape it, they do not create, and

[1] *Scouting for Boys*, p. 6.
[2] *The Psychology of Child Development*, Irving King, pp. 157-163.
[3] Cf. Coe, *Education in Religion and Morals*, p. 214.

may without exaggeration be dignified by the name of a rudimentary religious consciousness."[1] Two examples, which seem to justify this statement, may be given. The little deaf, dumb, and blind Helen Keller, when nearly ten years of age, wrote: "Who made the earth and the sky and everything? Who makes the sun warm?"[2] And the uninstructed deaf-mute, M. d'Estrella, formed for himself the idea of a "Strong Man behind the hills who threw the sun up into the sky, puffed the clouds from his pipe, and sent out the wind when he was angry."

Animism is a great characteristic of children's life and thought, as of that of primitive peoples. All the world is alive; rocks and streams, sun, wind and clouds, dolls and toys, all have a life like their own. Miss Ingelow wrote of herself: "When a little over two years old, and for about a year after, I had the habit of attributing intelligence not only to all living creatures . . . but even to stones and manufactured articles. I used to feel how dull it must be for the pebbles in the causeway to be obliged to lie still and only see what was round about. When I used to walk out with a little basket for putting flowers in I used sometimes to pick up a pebble or two and carry them on to have a change; then at the farthest point of the walk turn them out, not doubting that they would be pleased to have a new view."[3] The same kindly consideration was shown by another small girl, who was found sitting among wild flowers

[1] W. B. Selbie, *The Psychology of Religion*, p. 167.
[2] J. B. Pratt, *The Psychology of Religious Belief*, pp. 212-213 (note).
[3] Article in *Longman's Magazine*, Feb. 1890.

because "they are lonesome and like to have me with them."[1] When William Canton's little boy had bumped his head against the baluster, and the sore place had been soothed with a kiss, he went and kissed the baluster to heal its hurt too.[2] In such a world the child has no difficulty in thinking of unseen beings and powers. Very many children share the experience of an invisible playmate described by William Canton.[3] Angels and spirits and an unseen God present no difficulties to them, as they seem to present no difficulties to primitive peoples.

Another common characteristic is fetichism, the superstitious use of an inanimate object supposed to be possessed of some mysterious power for good or evil. A savage armed with his fetich feels secure and bold. A child with his is perfectly happy, if it is lost he is in despair. Clavier quotes an instance, discovered in the course of his inquiry, of a boy who was utterly desolated at the loss of a military button, "because this button was to me as the apple of my eye." He prayed to God to show him where it was, and on finding it immediately vowed to be henceforth an ardent defender of God's cause![4]

Objects used by the children in this way include all sorts and varieties of curious things, *e.g.*, a Canton-flannel stuffed dog, an old blanket, a peacock feather, a smooth oblong stone, a little down-pillow,

[1] Dawson, *The Child and his Religion*, p. 34.
[2] Cf. *The Invisible Playmate* (Everyman), p. 212.
[3] *Op. cit.* [4] *L'idee de Dieu chez l'Enfant*, p. 24.

a spool, the stump of a tree and the wooden hoop of an old keg (all in one collection of instances).[1] And what of the millions of dolls loved and treasured throughout the world? Sir John Lubbock considers the doll "a hybrid between the baby and the fetish that exhibits the contradictory characters of its parents."[2] Nearly all these child-fetiches are powers for good to the child-mind, but exceptions can be noted. George Sand, in her autobiography, tells of a toy "Punch" that was given to her, how she saw in imagination its wicked eyes gleaming at her when she was in bed, and how she used to lock away her beloved doll from its supposed baneful influence.

With children, as with primitive peoples, the earliest reflection on the origin of things naturally takes the form of myth-making. It is the age of curiosity, of imagination untrammelled by experience and thought, of fairy-tales. As those Semitic tribes of far-off days observed the world they lived in, the terrors of natural phenomena, the mystery of the starry sky at midnight, the nightly miracle of dark and dawn, they thought and expressed the reason for these things in the immortal stories which are now to be found in the first chapters of Genesis. Their kinship with the child's own thought makes these stories beloved by all little children to this day.

There is kinship, too, in the thought of God, invariably anthropomorphic in these early stages of religion. "God and Oswald Clarke are two of the

[1] Article, "Child Fetishes," in *The Pedagogical Seminary*, Vol. V.
[2] *Origin of Civilization*, Appendix, p. 521.

nicest men I know" is a perfectly natural childish utterance.[1] Dr. G. Stanley Hall made a study among Boston children who had the following ideas of God. "God is a big, perhaps blue, man, very often seen in the sky or in the clouds, in the church, or even in the street. He came in our gate, comes to see us sometimes. He lives in a big palace, or a big brick or stone house in the sky. He makes lamps, babies, dogs, trees, money, etc., and the angels work for him. He looks like the priest, Froebel, papa, etc., and they like to look at him, and a few would like to be God. He lights the stars so he can see to go on the sidewalk or into the church. Birds, children, Santa Claus live with him, and most but not all like him better than they do the latter."[2] The results of Clavier's study among French children are very similar. Of these 27 per cent. gave answers of completely materialistic anthropomorphism, 58 per cent. showed this slightly modified, and 15 per cent. an anthropomorphism more or less spiritualized.[3] The children were from six to twelve years of age. Most of them picture God as a giant, or as a very old man. He lives in heaven, in a house with roof, doors and windows, surrounded by a beautiful garden full of flowers. He works constantly in the universe, making creatures, sending storms, rain, thunder, wind.[4] One is reminded constantly of Yahweh who rides on the wings of the storm. As a rule the children love to think of God's

[1] Wodehouse, *The Scripture Lesson in the Elementary School*, p. 9.
[2] *Pedagogical Seminary*, June, 1891.
[3] *Op. cit.*, p. 148.
[4] *Op. cit.*, pp. 14-18.

omnipotence and do not doubt it, but His omnipresence is much questioned. Frequently there are parallels to the Old Testament ideas of Gods of various localities. "Is there two gods, one to look after granny in the country and one to look after us in Highbury?"[1] Clavier quotes a similar instance from one of his inquiries:

"Edward (3 years), on holiday at G——, at his aunt's house, while his parents were at P——, refused to say his prayers, saying: 'Le Bon Dieu of Gilhoc does not know that my father is ill and le Bon Dieu of Peyraud will not hear me.'"[2]

The enormous amount of ritual and ceremony in the external and practical aspects of primitive religion is a fact so well known that it needs no comment or illustration. As a rule, children, in so far as they take any part in religious ceremony or ritual, have to join in that of their adult relations. But when children are left to express their own sense of worship in their own way it is frequently done with a full ritual of their own invention. Goethe, as a boy, made and worshipped at his own little altar. George Sand did the same.

"She chose a little wood in her grandfather's garden, a perfect thicket of young trees and undergrowth, into which nobody ever penetrated. . . . Here, in a natural temple of green, carpeted with a magnificent moss, she proceeded to erect an altar against a tree-stem, decking it with shells and other ornaments and crowning it with a wreath of flowers

[1] Earl Barnes, *Studies in Education*, 2nd series, p. 292.
[2] *Op. cit.*, pp. 23-24 (note).

suspended from a branch above." [1] Here she worshipped according to a ritual of her own.

It may be objected that she was brought up in a Catholic country and so was familiar with the ritual of the altar, but a little English girl carried out a very similar idea.

" Laura's favourite spot on fine Sunday afternoons was a ' fairy dell ' in the garden, where there was a large hollow tree. The place was sacred to her, for in the eyes of the four-year-old child it was the ' House of the Great King God.' Very few knew of its existence; and to those privileged ones who were allowed to enter, she used to say, ' Speak in whispers, please; we musn't make any noise here.' On a stool within the tree she would spread a meal for the Great King, a meal of nuts and sweets, in wee dishes, ornamented with flowers and leaves. ' I keep His house tidy, and sing to Him while He eats His food,' she would say, softly and innocently. ' He is sorry when it is wet because I can't sing to Him then '—and then she added in answer to a question, ' My Great King God is very big, with a lovely face like mother's, with large, lovely blue eyes. He is always smiling, and loves little girls like me. He is dressed in all the colours of the flowers, and that is why I never see Him.' " [2]

We might think such things as this the idiosyncrasies of exceptional children, were it not for the joy and interest with which groups of children will

[1] James Sully, *op. cit.*, p. 511.

[2] Mumford, *The Dawn of Religion in the Mind of the Child*, p. 30.

join in such ritual and ceremonies. The following report comes from a small rural school.

"We have a service once a week, all meeting together. . . . Once a term the children arrange everything, deciding both on the central idea and on its carrying out. They arranged a beautiful little service based on the thought of a pure heart. They chose passages from the Psalms to be read and recited, and borrowed pictures of Samuel and Sir Galahad and different Madonnas. They carried out a rather intricate ritual which involved the lighting of candles, the wearing of white flowers and ribbons, and the reciting of portions of Malory's 'Morte d'Arthur' and Tennyson's 'Passing of Arthur.'" [1]

Such, then, seem to be the main characteristics of children's religion. The right training and development of the tendencies behind them is the subject of this study.

[1] Wodehouse, *op. cit.*, p. 69.

II

SUGGESTION AND IMITATION

"In every work the beginning is the most important part, especially in dealing with anything young and tender," said Socrates long ago. Modern psychology and child-study affords striking proof of the wisdom of his statement. In infancy and early childhood Freud finds the origin of the "complexes" which do so much in later years to disturb life and to destroy its balance and happiness. Here Adler finds the beginning of the "inferiority complex" which determines the whole trend of so many people's "life-lines." But it is not only importance for the study of abnormal psychology that we find in these earliest years; they are of immense importance, too, in normal, healthy development. Miss Margaret McMillan, after her wide experience of nursery-school work, gives her conclusions on the point in these words: "In the first years there can be no formal lessons—no formal attitudes even—and yet in these months and years education goes on more rapidly than at any later period. Not heredity alone, but every detail of circumstance and place, habit and experience is playing a part in this natural education; and, by the time a child is seven years old, so much is done or undone, that the teacher enters at last to

look not (as was long supposed) on a beginning, but on a little person who is far advanced along the road of life." [1]

How then can we bring any influence to bear on the mental and spiritual life of the infant in these early years? There can be little doubt that one of our most potent means of influence is the power of suggestion, *i.e.*, the unreasoning acceptance of an idea by the mind. Everybody is, to a certain extent, suggestible. This is illustrated by the well-known dodge of collecting a crowd by merely standing still and staring upwards with an expression of rapt interest. From the suggestion of the printed page comes the great power of the Press; in suggestion lies the reason for the vast business of modern advertizing. An adult tends to become less suggestible as he is better educated and his own power of independent judgment increases. In a little child these influences have not modified his native suggestibility; his need and his imperious emotions greatly increase it. In the tiny baby its beginnings are seen in physiological suggestion. The foundations of habits of regularity, order and self-control can be laid by helping the child to perform his physical functions of feeding, sleep and excretion at stated and regular intervals; by not running and picking him up whenever he cries. This does not mean that the baby will have to do without the love and "mothering" which the doctors tell us give the baby who has had it such an advantage over the one who has not, but just that the "mothering" will be

[1] *Experimental Psychology.*

wise as well as tender. The baby must not feel that it will get what it wants, whether good for it or not, if only it cries and kicks for it long enough. Here the mother reaps what she sows. Where she has been weak and indulgent she may reap the crop of "negativism," when the child has been so used to getting his own way that he becomes "contra-suggestible," acting always in opposition to the will of others. This is often the case with only children and is best cured by putting them among a group of healthy children, or in some other way changing their environment.[1]

Very soon the mother or nurse becomes able to influence, by suggestion, not only the physical but also the mental life of the child. The baby tumbles as he tries to walk, puckers his little face and instinctively looks up at the mother to see if he is to laugh or cry. If her face and voice suggest courage and fun and adventure, not only is an unpleasant scene averted but the child has learnt something of a right and fine attitude to life. If, on the other hand, she rushes to see "if my poor baby is badly hurt," and beats "the wicked ground" for causing such woe, the baby will join in with a roar of misery and will have lost something of courage and of truth into the bargain. The mother's suggestion should always convey belief in the child's essential goodness, kindness and courage, although she may recognize that there has been a temporary lapse from it. "You have hurt this little baby, but you did not really

[1] See Article by Dr Eric Pritchard in *Health and Psychology of the Child.*

think how it would hurt him, or else I know you would not have done it," is a suggestion potent for good.

The power of suggestion is so enormous in these early years that a word of warning must be spoken. A mother of strong will and forceful character may use this method so exclusively that her child's life becomes just an automatic reflection of her own. This does not mean that she will try to dispense with suggestion, even if that were possible, but that she will also try to develop the right kind of independence and self-reliance in her children. "Suggestibility in the child has a genetic value, which lies in the possibility of transmitting rapidly to a child a great amount of racial experience, while he is still incapable of fully apprehending the rational basis of it. It is the substitution of mediate for immediate experience. . . . It must be our aim to bring up children so that they respect all racial experience, and at the same time learn in due course to challenge all authority."[1] In other words, suggestion is a power the mother cannot help using, and has every right to use, if she uses it wisely, but she must recognize that the time will come when it will be largely outgrown, and she must prepare for that day.

What use can be made of this power, then, in religious education? First of all, it attests the truth behind the well-known saying of a Jesuit priest: "Give me the child for the first seven years of his

[1] Dr Crichton Miller, *The New Psychology and the Teacher*, pp. 35 and 37.

life, and I care not who has him afterwards," and suggests that real religious education begins in the first year of life. Long before the baby can think consciously at all he is influenced by the mental and spiritual attitude of those about him. Not very long ago the matron of a Babies' Home noticed that one of her babies, who had been healthy and contented, was becoming emaciated, fretful, sleepless and highly nervous, although he was having the same food and treatment which had agreed with him so well previously. The nurse in charge of him was a first-rate nurse, but in some private anxiety and trouble which was a severe nervous strain upon her. Wondering if this could be the cause of the baby's state, the matron changed his nurse without changing his food or treatment in any other way. At once the baby began to take his food and sleep again and, within a few days, was his former, placid, contented self. The first nurse very shortly afterwards had a complete nervous breakdown. The matron said that she had no option but to conclude that the baby's nervous state was a direct reflection of the nurse's. If such is the influence of a spirit distressed, may not a spirit poised and balanced, in harmony with itself, with its fellows and with God, have at least as great an influence upon the infant? Such was Froebel's firm belief, and although it can hardly be demonstrably proved there is much evidence to support the idea. If the mother, night after night, kneels by her baby's cradle, praying softly and reverently aloud, the same group of sense-impressions enters his mind, and unconsciously her love and

reverence are communicated to him, so that her feelings become in a measure his long before her thoughts can do so.[1]

That such a position is not entirely fanciful is indicated by an actual instance quoted by Clavier.[2] The child of an atheist father and a religious mother used to listen to his mother singing in a low voice to him as he lay in his cradle. As he grew a little older he found she was singing of some Invisible Friend, but could understand no more than that. Yet, when frightened by any vague terror, he remembered his mother's tone and attitude at these times, and felt peaceful and secure in the protection of this Mysterious Being. When he was only three years old they moved to a new house; the mother, whose faith was overcome by misfortunes, came under the atheistic sway of her husband, and spoke no more of God to her child. Yet, when his mother fell seriously ill when he was eight years old, he turned for help to this Invisible Friend, was assured of the recovery of his mother (which did take place) and always after that believed in and prayed to God. Here, before three years of age, we find a lasting religious impression made, almost entirely by suggestion. Coe believes that the religious impulse is found, in an earlier stage still, in an attitude, almost indistinguishable from worship, towards the child's parents, in response to their love and care.[3] Professor Tracy agrees here: "It is a tolerably safe assertion

[1] Cf. Mumford, *The Dawn of Religion in the Mind of the Child.*

[2] *Op. cit.*, pp. 40, 41.

[3] *Education in Religion and Morals*, p. 222.

that a child who, for any reason, has never worshipped his mother will be so much the less likely ever to worship any other divinity." This is probably true in very many cases, but it is a stage which cannot last long, for the parents cannot permanently meet or satisfy all the demands of the child's mind and soul, and the need for an All-wise, All-just, All-loving Being seems to be felt naturally in this way, although the child cannot, of course, consciously formulate it.

As soon as the child is able to understand words the possibility of suggestion widens considerably, and suggestion by ideas conveyed directly by speech becomes possible. One small French boy lost for ever his fear of the dark after his mother had made the verbal suggestion, " Do not be afraid, dear; God will take care of you."[1]

We must remember, however, that such a suggestion is not conveyed by the words alone, but also by the feelings and emotional moods of the parents. Children have an almost uncanny power of sensing what these are, apart from speech, and when the words used and the mood in which they are spoken are in conflict it is the latter that will provide the real suggestion. Dr Hadfield tells of an experiment of his own which shows the child's suggestibility to mood.

" A boy of two and a half was bringing a barrow from the garden through the French window into the dining-room. I said angrily, ' Take that barrow outside!' He stamped and shouted, ' I won't!' I

[1] Clavier, *op. cit.*, p. 28 (note).

then changed my mood and in quieter tones said, 'That is a dirty barrow! It would never do to bring a dirty thing like that into this nice clean room, would it?' He replied, 'No,' and immediately turned about and took it out. He obeyed the suggestion where he refused the command. Such an instance as this is often explained as an appeal to reason; in my opinion it is not so, but pure suggestion, the suggestion of my mood; anger in the first instance producing rebelliousness, and a quiet conciliatory mood in the other producing acquiescence."[1]

If the child is thus influenced by what the parent feels he is influenced also by what the parent is. Unconscious suggestion is more powerful than conscious suggestion and is what ultimately counts. If the parents are capricious, despotic, nagging, hypocritical; if they worry and are despondent about the future, if they show no courage and strength when trouble comes, if they are habitually seeking their own pleasure, if love and truth are not the atmosphere of the home, no amount of conscious religious instruction will blot out the impression these things have made in the children's lives. And the reverse is fortunately true; real religion, real trust in God and love for Him cannot be hid.

Inextricably bound up with suggestion is the instinct of imitation; indeed it is but the reverse side of the same thing, the natural response to it on the part of the one to whom the suggestion is made. It is generally recognized as one of the universal and

[1] *Health and Psychology of the Child*, p. 92.

primary instincts, found in all races and conditions, and forming one of the greatest educative factors in child-life. Wordsworth noticed that at one period of his life the child behaves

> As if his whole vocation,
> Were endless imitation.[1]

The instinct is undeveloped at birth, but at about six months of age observers notice the first signs of imitation, generally of movements at first and then of sounds. The latter are sometimes marvellously realistic. Dr Pritchard tells of "a little Indian baby who, while on the voyage to England, so closely imitated the noise of the fog-horn, that when his parents took up their quarters in a London hotel the proprietor requested them to leave owing to complaints by other visitors who were disturbed by his siren-like vocalizations."[2] At first the imitation is "simple" (*i.e.*, the movement or sound is just repeated with the same mistakes each time), but later it becomes "persistent" and the mistakes are gradually rectified. This shows the presence of will, and is of great value to the child himself. It is his attempt to understand life by entering into the experiences of those about him. "With the child the emphasis is not on the copying of a character, but on the attainment of a certain experience that comes through the copying or imitating."[3]

[1] *Ode on Immortality.*
[2] *Health and Psychology of the Child*, p. 26.
[3] King, *The Psychology of Child Development*, p. 119.

Miss Frean has made the following interesting summary of children's imitations:[1]

	3 YEARS	7 YEARS
What the Child Imitates—		
1. Animals	5%	10%
2. Children	10%	10%
3. Adults	85%	80%
Kind of Imitation—		
1. Direct	35%	15%
2. Play	50%	80%
3. Idea	65%	75%
The Characteristics Imitated—		
1. Speech	15%	10%
2. Action	70%	80%
3. Action, Speech and Sound	75%	60%

It is very interesting to notice here how very large is the proportion of imitation of adults, compared with that of other children, and this shows how very careful parents and teachers have to be not to do anything which they would not have their children imitate. One teacher was puzzled to know why it was that her class of forty small children swayed their bodies from side to side with a curious kind of rhythm when singing, until one day she realized, with a sudden shock of surprise, that that was how she always sang herself! It is possible to see scolding and threatening mothers, drunken fathers, pompous preachers, or gracious hostesses, loving mothers, strong and kindly fathers, all pictured with startling fidelity in the imitation play of the children.

[1] See *The Child*, Tanner, p. 296.

If this instinct is thus of great value to the individual child in helping him to enter into an ever-widening experience, it is also of great social value to the community, helping it to transmit the racial heritage of manners and customs with the minimum of effort and the maximum of success. So many psychologists see in imitation the main socializing element in human consciousness, and see in a child who does not imitate much the unsocial child and the potential enemy of society.

Some parents and teachers are afraid that if they let their children imitate too much they will grow up lacking in originality, but this fear seems to have no real basis in fact. In free play originality and invention are almost invariably combined with imitation, and in any case the latter helps the child to get through the preliminary stages of acquiring technique which is the necessary starting-point for original work.

The value of imitation in religious education is in helping the children to transform the religious suggestions, which have been considered above, into actions and experiences of their own. This must happen if the suggestions are to be lasting in their effects. It is easier for children to imitate suggestive acts than suggestions of a more abstract kind. It is in this connection that psychologists recognize the value of religious family customs, such as grace at meals and family prayers. The simple fact of joining in these acts of worship helps the children to get something of the feelings which accompany them in the parents, if they are sincere. This is due to the

fact that bodily attitude or activity does tend to produce the corresponding emotion; quietness and reverence of outward attitude do help towards quietness and reverence of spirit. Of course this is not, in itself, sufficient; but the child may, and often does, go on from this simple imitation to a creative play which has real and lasting effect on his life. The ritual of religion has always been a favourite form of children's games; Jesus watched the children of His day playing at weddings and funerals. We may hardly be able, at first, to dignify these by the name of religious acts, but often they do lead to real religious feeling and behaviour. Clavier reports such a case:

"I well remember," writes a lady, "that after having been present for the first time at a Communion Service (she was then eight years old), I played at Church and had a Communion Service. That made a profound impression upon me. I felt obliged to be very good all that week."[1]

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 50.

III

THE USE OF THE IMAGINATION

That great creative human faculty which we call imagination probably has its humble origin in simple memory images. "Psychologically, imagination is distinguished from memory only by the fact that the ideas reproduced are reproduced in new combinations and not as originally experienced."[1] These new combinations of ideas, like memory, may be either voluntary or involuntary. We are all familiar with the involuntary new combinations of ideas from previous sensory experiences which occur in dreams. It may easily be that imagination first begins to function in the child-mind in this way, but this must remain a surmise. Psychologically it is important to distinguish between the two kinds of imagination: (*a*) That which should more properly be called "imagery," *i.e.*, the calling up of previous sensory images, whether visual, auditory, or images of taste or smell or feeling; these are the raw material of (*b*) imagination proper which combines them in new, original and constructive ways. This imagination precedes all real works of art, whether literary, musical, architectural, or the art of fine and noble living itself. Shakespeare thus describes

[1] James Ward, *op. cit.*, p. 72.

the whole process of observation, conception and embodiment:

> The poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling,
> Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven ;
> And, as imagination bodies forth
> The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
> Turns them to shapes, and gives to airy nothing
> A local habitation and a name.[1]

Anyone who has seen children playing spontaneously, or heard their stories of the wonders seen on their daily walks, can have no doubt of the tremendous part played by a free and unfettered imagination in their lives. Life lies before them and imagination provides the forecast and rehearsal of it; lack of experience of what life really is leaves fancy as yet unchecked, at times almost unbounded. This is true of the majority of little children, although, of course, the faculty is more vivid and potent in some children than in others. To these small artists one corner of the nursery may be a witch's den, one a boundless forest, one a prince's noble castle, one a woodman's cottage. The younger the child the less his imagination needs any "stage-properties" to come to its aid. The sheets of the bed were sea and landscape to the little sick R. L. S.

> And sometimes for an hour or so
> I watched my leaden soldiers go,
> With different uniforms and drills,
> Among the bed-clothes through the hills ;

---

[1] *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Act v, Scene i.

And sometimes sent my ships in fleets,
All up and down among the sheets ;
Or brought my trees and houses out,
And planted cities all about.[1]

To most children the land of make-believe and the land of reality seem to have no fixed boundaries and they trot from one to the other, with no sense of incongruity, in a way that baffles their sophisticated elders. It is difficult to say just how far the land of make-believe is real to children; perhaps this varies with individual temperament. George Sand all her life remembered the feeling of astonished bewilderment which overcame her when, after playing she had been in a dark forest until it was utterly real to her, her mother picked her up and carried her to the lighted supper-table.[2]

This confusion between real and imaginary worlds is at the root of much of children's so-called " lying." The child tells long and circumstantial stories of his adventures which have no foundation at all in fact. What is the parent or teacher to do in such a case? The first thing to do is to look at the motive, and see if the child is really trying to deceive or not. To assume that the child is lying, and with deliberate purpose, is to make a powerful evil suggestion to him and to convince him of the injustice of the world. Yet he must be brought to recognize the difference between fancy and fact. One may say " That is a jolly fairy-story—things like that happen

[1] Stevenson, " The Land of Counterpane," in *The Child's Garden of Verses.*

[2] See Sully, *op. cit.*, p. 494.

in the land of fairy-stories, but not really in this world." Then show why they cannot happen. Or one may tell the child of marvellous adventures of one's own, and say it was just play, and wasn't his that kind of story, too? Often enough it is sufficient to enter into his story in the spirit of play and to go on acting out the imaginary adventures. Parents of only children are often called upon to do this; these children, too, often invent an imaginary playmate of about their own age, sometimes this playmate is the child's other self, good or bad, as the case may be. Often the child behaves admirably when disguised as the good other self, as wise parents have many times proved. W. V.'s other self was "Gladys":

"Now, as decorum at table is one of the cardinal virtues, W. V. dines by proxy. It is her charming young friend Gladys who gives us the pleasure of her company. It is strange how many things this bewildering daughter of mine can do as Gladys, which she cannot possibly accomplish as W. V. W. V. is unruly, a chatterbox, careless, or at least forgetful, of the elegancies of the social board; whereas Gladys is a model of manners, an angel in a bib. W. V. cannot eat crusts and rebels against porridge at breakfast; Gladys idolizes crusts, and as for porridge—'I *am* surprised your little girl does not like porridge. It is *so* good for her.'"[1]

This kind of phantasy may be entirely beneficial, for it is carried over into real life; but it becomes a

[1] Canton, *The Invisible Playmate* (Everyman), p. 54.

menace when it is used as a refuge from reality or is wholly confused with it. Dreams may take the place of deeds, emotion may be lavishly expended in imaginary situations, thus leaving real life impoverished of all keen and just feeling and of all vivid experience. Instead of facing the hard facts of life and mastering them, the child (and later the adult) will run away from them into his imaginary world of milk and honey, of results without effort and of magic solutions of difficulties. When this tendency goes unchecked the child may develop into the girl who becomes " engaged " to a non-existent lover, buys her own ring and writes and posts herself letters; or into the man who is always on the verge of some highly-successful business deal, which a miraculous bad luck always manages to thwart at the last moment. It is a consciousness of the many evils that result from this failure to grasp life's nettle, which has stirred Dr Montessori to denounce the " games and foolish stories " [1] by which teachers seek to develop the child's imagination, and to banish all fairy-stories from her educational scheme. While there is need for her protest against many foolish and meaningless stories told by thoughtless parents or teachers, especially against such an immoral story as " Little Red Riding-Hood," [2] other fairy-tales do contain a racial heritage of beauty and truth and usefulness in a form in which children can apprehend it. The stories of St George and the Dragon which he slays in the power of courage and love, and of

[1] Quoted in Introduction to *The Montessori Method.*

[2] See discussion by Crichton Miller, *op. cit.*, p. 67 f.

the Sleeping Beauty, asleep and spell-bound by an evil power, surrounded by dust and tangled thorns, cut off from human aid until awakened by the kiss of love, are mines of wisdom and spiritual truth. The story-teller who feels these deep underlying truths will have no need to put them into words in a neat appended moral; the story itself will give them body and life. Granted that there *is* danger in this faculty of imagination, granted that like all other human faculties it may run to seed, possible abuse should not mean utter misuse, but rather wise training and legitimate expression in life. A brief consideration of the uses of imagination to the individual and to society will convince us that any attempt to suppress it is not only foolish, but wrong.

First, its value to the individual. When life is dreary or tragic for a man, imagination carries him to happier and more interesting lands, and he has every right to go provided that he comes back, rested and refreshed and heartened, to fight his real battles. Such a faculty enables one to see straightly and to hold the balance when overshadowed by personal tragedy. The children must not lack this power. It is probably for this reason that imagination is so often the child of suffering, and that the greatest imaginative poets and novelists are those who have most deeply suffered. But it is not only in such ways that imagination is creative. It lies at the back of all real art, of all creative invention; no man, without it, will lead his fellows into new worlds of thought and experience. "If imagination is sufficiently vivid and flexible, we can, as it were,

rehearse, with little time and trouble or risk, what it would be impossible or difficult to attempt in fact; so that, the more we can mature our ideas in this manner, the fewer will be our aimless and fruitless actions and experiments. We shall be like an engineer who makes sketches on paper before he proceeds to a model of his design. Or, in other cases, as in history and travel, imagination is our artist to depict, on the mental stage or canvas, scenes for which the most masterly verbal descriptions are but stage directions or rough outlines."[1] Imagination as a preliminary "sketch on paper" finds its most practical outlet in the choice and planning of a career, but that is mainly an adolescent aspect of imagination and need not be more than mentioned here as a reason for the right training of imagination in the child.

While, in these and other ways, imagination is of great use to the individual, it is no less valuable to society. This is so because of the close connexion between imagination, sympathy and reform. How can we help a man unless, at any rate to a certain degree, we can sympathize with him? How can we sympathize with him unless we can put ourselves in his place? How can we put ourselves in his place unless we have imagination? Experience, no doubt, will do it; but if we had to depend for help on those who were at the same time in the same distressful circumstances as ourselves, we should often be in sore straits. As it is, a sympathetic and informed imagination brings our friends to our aid.

[1] James Ward, *op. cit.*, p. 73.

Such imagination is the basis of all valuable social conduct; of ordinary good manners, of prison and industrial reform, of hospital and sick relief, of tact, of helpfulness in innumerable ways. In this sense, at least, no one entirely lacking in imagination could live a Christian life.

In his recent book, *Reality*, Canon Streeter argues that imagination has also another religious value, as a means of apprehending something beyond present knowledge and experience. He remembers the myths to which Plato "would often have recourse when, at the end of a long and arduous quest for truth, he felt that the pure intellect had shot its bolt but something yet remained unsaid."[1] If such concrete imagery was at times necessary to Plato, it is infinitely more so to little children, to whom philosophy and abstract terms mean literally nothing. "All children have always insisted, and will always insist, on having their rhymes and songs and tales, their pictures and tunes and dances; if you don't provide them, they will make them up for themselves; if you are wise you will help them to educate themselves by fostering this primitive poetic faculty; stooping to its level and feeding it with the poems—spoken poems, song poems, painted poems, acted poems—for which it craves."[2]

The question now arises how we can best train this faculty so that it will be used and not abused. First, let us notice that imagination in the first place depends on memory-images, so that we must try to

[1] Streeter, *Reality*, p. 52.

[2] R. G. Collingwood in *The Hibbert Journal*, April, 1926.

get our children to form habits of careful and accurate observation of things as they really are, for our constructive imagination is necessarily limited by our previous experiences and power to make the most of them. Another way of stimulating the imagination is by stimulating the child's curiosity; he is stirred to find the answer and his imagination begins to work.

But perhaps the greatest external stimulus to the imagination is the story; whether history, fairy-tale, myth, legend or allegory, especially stories of dramatic action. The stories are far more effective if well told than if read; there is a charm and mystery about them which makes them live. Goethe's mother describes a scene from his childhood which, although it cannot account for his genius, explains how it was enriched. "I could never be tired of telling them," she says, "as long as he was not tired of listening. I represented fire, water, earth and air as beautiful princesses, and gave a meaning to all that goes on in Nature. I believed in it myself more implicitly than my listeners did, and when we pretended there were roads between the stars, and that we should sometime live in stars, and thought what great spirits we should meet up there, nobody was ever more eager than I for the hour of story-telling with the children, nor more vexed when some invitation I had received prevented it. There sat I, and there was he with his great black eyes devouring me, and if the fate of any favourite did not go right according to his sense, I could see how the angry vein would swell in his forehead, and how he

would choke down his tears. When my imagination fell short it would often be patched out by his."[1]

It is certain that this simple, vivid story-telling method is not used enough in religious education; a method which presents truth in a short and concrete way, which stirs the sympathies and emotions, stimulates thought and imagination, and wipes out those barriers of time and space which divide us from the events of that Life in Galilee nearly two thousand years ago. The question arises here as to how far we should tell wonder-stories as if we believed them to be literal fact. Much will depend here upon the age of the children. A very little child is incapable of differentiating between truth of fact and truth of meaning. Here we must tell the stories and leave them without explanation or discussion, although even here the right setting may be given by some such introductory remark as, "This is a story that the Hebrews told round their camp-fires," or "Here is a story which Jesus must have heard when He was a little boy." (This question is more fully discussed in Section VI.)

When the child has had his imagination stirred by a good story his instinct seems to be to use it again, in a constructive form, by living-out the story in play, which is a real preparation for life itself; an invaluable exercise for the imagination. Is it an exercise that can be used in religious education? Many people are shocked and troubled at the bare idea. Play is secular and irreverent and

[1] Quoted in *Pedagogical Seminary*, April, 1898.

must not be connected with holy things. Yet the really religious spirit is the play-spirit, and the irreligious spirit wrecks play as it wrecks all life. As was argued in the section on "The Religion of Children" their religion seems to be made up of play; grave, sweet and reverent play. Here, too, play is a preparation for real life, and if it is thwarted or mocked, it is with grave risk of stunting the child's religious development and of preventing the truth from sinking into the depths of his soul. An Old Testament incident, a New Testament parable, played out by the children, stamps the thing upon their minds. Says Clavier: "Martha has acted the parable of the lost coin. Her house was . . . under the chair, her coin was hidden in a crack in the floor. Martha has searched and swept, in view of all the delighted children; she has found the coin; she has shown it to them. All together they have repeated the parable. Martha will not forget it, nor will the others."[1] Dr L. P. Jacks quotes a saying of Goethe's—"The highest cannot be spoken," and then goes on to argue that it can always be *acted:* "By acting it we not only grasp it firmly ourselves, but we communicate it in the clearest manner one to another. There is a language of action as well as of words; and of the two the language of action is the more telling, the more intelligible, the more unmistakable, and in the deepest sense the more eloquent. Some of the profoundest truths ever recorded to mankind have been conveyed

[1] Clavier, *op. cit.*, p. 180.

through the language of action. Christianity is an example."[1]

Two examples of the religious use of the imagination acted out in children's lives may be given here. A small boy had been hearing in his Sunday School stories of the wanderings in the wilderness. His mother was taking him out, and, fearing he would be tired after a long walk, wished him to get into his carriage. "No," said he firmly, "God helped the children of Israel to go on walking without getting tired and He'll help me." And he plodded doggedly on his way!

And the nurse who was with Dean Inge's little girl Paula in her last illness writes: "Being a Fairy Princess (as she really thought herself) she lived in a sweet imagination, loving all things beautiful, and doing things as a Princess should. On her fast-days she often said, 'I am a Princess, so I must not feel hungry.'"[2]

[1] *The Living Universe*, pp. 22, 23.
[2] Inge, *Personal Religion and the Life of Devotion*, p. 93.

IV

THE CHILD'S FEARS AND HIS IDEA OF GOD

All men, as all animals, know what it is to fear. "Fear walks through the jungle by day and by night," says Kipling. The more helpless the creature the greater the fear, for in fear, and its outcome flight, lies its only safety in time of danger. "As timid as a hare" is full of significance when we remember how defenceless the hare would otherwise be. In this weakness and helplessness lies one of the main reasons for the widespread prevalence of fear among children. Another great cause of fear is the unknown, and since for children most things fall within this category, we cannot wonder at the great place fear plays in their lives, or at the amount of suffering to which it gives rise. Most parents and teachers would agree with George Sand: "Fear is, I believe, the greatest moral suffering of children."

The fears of children have been divided into two main classes—(*a*) instinctive fears or fears of fact, and (*b*) vague or imaginary fears.

(*a*) Among the instinctive fears are those of loud noises (which usually accompany the release of power of some kind), of strangers (who might have

evil intentions), of rapidly moving objects (which might injure the child), of heights (from which he might fall), of the dark (with its possibilities of falling or of sudden attack). These things have been so extensively harmful that an instinctive fear of them will occasion no surprise. Babies will cry and tremble at a sudden loud noise as early as the fourth month. Fears of unfamiliar things *seen* seem to come later, and fear of a strange face is more usual after about five or six months. Out of 138 instances of children's fears, collected in one inquiry, 54 related to specified objects, "nearly half of them people, a third animals, and the remnant chiefly some sort of machine, usually the steam-engine."[1] (*b*) The remaining 84 instances were of the second, the imaginary, type of children's fears, "a vague, haunting terror of the dark, of awful shapes, of 'something I know not what.'"[2] The dark is haunted by monsters, of strange shapes and terrifying appearance, especially with clutching propensities. It is peopled by ghosts and giants, the haunt of terrifying dreams. The chance remark of an older person often leads to some such paralysing terror. One little child who had been taught the text, "The zeal of Thy house has eaten me up," believed the church to be inhabited by a terrible wild beast.[3] Stevenson's genius has described these imaginary terrors:

> Now my little heart goes beating like a drum,
> With the breath of the Bogie in my hair;

[1] Earl Barnes, *Studies in Education.* [2] *Ibid.*
[3] Cf. E. P. St. John, *op. cit.*, p. 37.

And all around the candle the crooked shadows come,
And go marching along up the stair;
The shadow of the balusters, the shadow of the lamp,
The shadow of the child that goes to bed—
All the wicked shadows coming tramp, tramp, tramp,
With the black night overhead.

Rousseau suggests a natural cause for this fear of weird creatures in the dark; in the daylight men can see dangers approaching from a distance, and so prepare for them, but in the darkness there may be lurking unseen dangers which cannot be guarded against. Sully thinks the cause is rather the melancholy and gloomy suggestion of the darkness itself. Foolish mothers and nurses may sometimes add to the child's terrors, in a way which is really cruel and criminal, by suggesting that some bogey is hiding in the darkness waiting for an unruly child. They can have little idea of the present suffering, let alone the future psychic harm, which is caused by their thoughtlessness. But, apart from outside suggestion at all, it seems abundantly proved that the child's unaided imagination is vivid enough to create these strange imaginary terrors for itself. Like primitive man he fears everything big and mysterious, everything strange and unfamiliar, just because he does not understand it. In the melancholy isolation of darkness his imagination works unchecked and peoples the night with horrible beings.

When one thinks of this overwhelming burden of terrors, one is tempted to agree with Christian Science and other modern religions that fear is an altogether evil thing, and to ask why it should be

permitted in the world at all. Yet such an attitude is surely a short-sighted one. From the severely practical point of view fear is necessary to prevent the child from falling over a cliff, running under a motor-bus, walking away confidingly with a stranger, falling down the cellar stairs in the dark. This kind of fear is a necessary means of self-preservation. Another kind of wholesome fear, which serves the same purpose, is fear of breaking God's laws, whether natural, hygienic or moral. It is necessary for the child to learn that he cannot break these with impunity, or without suffering to himself or to other people.

The value of fear, then, is largely negative: it deters from wrong-doing, it does not give a positive impulse towards right action; it may prevent disobedience, it will hardly incite to joyful and intelligent obedience. It is a weapon which, if used in an unscrupulous way by parent or teacher, can work untold mental and spiritual harm. It interferes with the right relationship between parent or teacher and child, for it is the natural reaction towards an enemy and not towards a friend. The only fear which children should have of their parents is the fear of hurting them or of being unworthy of their love. Any other kind of fear leads to deception and lying, fear of punishment and anger makes the children incapable of telling the truth, or of acknowledging a fault. They repress the memory of the fault and of the lie which followed it, and then, because children are always ashamed of their fears, they repress the fear itself. From these repressions

come nightmare, hysteria, anxiety, inferiority-complex, and the whole host of neurotic symptoms. One schoolmaster of wide experience finds fear at the root of nearly all the nervous troubles of childhood. The trouble is, in his opinion, so inseparable from the feeling of inferiority, that he gives it the name of "the inferiority-fear complex," and argues that it is time that schoolmasters should join in proclaiming that the primary cause of repression in childhood is not sex but fear.[1] This connexion of the feeling of inferiority with the feeling of fear is the basis of Adler's earnest plea that, above everything else, the parent should see to it that the child does not lose his self-confidence and his courage; this is bound to go if the little child is cowed by the stern severity or cruelty of those in authority over him, or by the "policeman" or "bogey" fictions of foolish nurses.

If the relationship between child and parent is right, the latter will not be the source of fear but the refuge from it, in whose loving arms fear dies away and peace and calm are found again. The thoughtful parent will never mock or make light of the child's fears, but will try to understand what has caused them and then to remove the cause. As fear is response to danger of some sort he must show the child that the danger no longer exists or has never existed. To force him to face the cause of his fear before this has been done is cruel as well as unwise. It may cause a nervous shock whose effects will last for many a long day. Since the

[1] Cf. Morton, *Childhood's Fears*.

main causes of fear are helplessness and ignorance, the best remedies for it are protection and enlightenment; wise teachers will give both in right proportion. As extreme sensitiveness and nervous instability are often connected with physical delicacy, nervous children should have long hours of rest and sleep, plain and nourishing food, a quiet and regular life without much excitement and should be encouraged in habits of self-control. If they are subject to imaginary terrors, the imagination should be given healthy material on which to work, good and joyful stories or facts of natural history or of animal life. Curiosity should be stimulated for it is a natural antidote to fear; both are stirred in the presence of the unfamiliar. When a child is hurt, curiosity will sometimes make him repeat the experiment in order to study the experience. This was the case with a tiny girl who put her hand into a bush and pulled a cat's tail. The cat scratched and she hastily withdrew her hand, but curiosity conquered fear and she put it in again. Such curiosity leads on to the true spirit of adventure later. As the children gain in physical health, self-control and experience, the lower forms of fear tend to die out, the higher forms of it to be transmuted into something higher still. This raises the question of the function or value of fear in religious experience and education.

There can be no doubt that in the last century the appeal to fear held far too large a place in theology and preaching. Jonathan Edwards used to hold his congregations quaking over the brink of

hell, warning them that God's anger burned towards them as an unquenchable fire, that He held them only worthy of being cast into the fire, that they were as loathsome in His sight as vile serpents were in their own.[1] The four-year-old daughter of one of his listeners, after having heard her parents discuss this teaching, was found crying in an extremity of anguish because God would not forgive her sins and would send her to hell-fire, and hers was not an exceptional case. Wesley's *Journal* contains several such incidents. As late as 1852 a book of children's hymns was published containing such verses as

> There is a dreadful hell
> And everlasting pains;
> There sinners must with devils dwell,
> In darkness, fire and chains.[2]

Lurid pictures of hell, fearful ideas of God, have probably been responsible for terrible and widespread suffering among children and for later neurotic troubles. Probably much of the hysterical element in medieval religion had the same cause. In Clavier's inquiry a very large proportion of the children who were afraid of God gave as their reason for this that He might send them to hell. The following answers are typical:

"We are afraid of God because, if we do wrong things, He puts us in hell." "Because He can send me to hell, where His enemy the Devil will do me harm."[3]

[1] See *Sinners in the Hand of an Angry God.*

[2] *Hymns for Sunday Schools, Youth, and Children,* 1852.

[3] Clavier, *op. cit.,* p. 38.

The other great cause of children's fear of God is the idea given to them that He is a policeman or Judge in the sky, who spies on all their actions and writes them all down in a gigantic book. One teacher remembers "our teacher in Standard II, who insisted that God was always looking at children to see that they did not do anything wicked, and even in the night He still looked, by means of the moon and stars; so that for many years I disliked the stars exceedingly."[1] The favourite text of such teachers is "Thou God seest me," and the dread of this All-seeing but Unseen Eye destroys all possibility of the child's love for God. How can he love this dangerous and vindictive Spectator? All the evidence goes to show that these terrible ideas of God do not arise spontaneously in the children's minds, for they are trustful by nature, but that they are suggested by adults. Probably no greater harm can be done by one human soul to another than to put such a barrier between it and the Heavenly Father, a barrier which leaves the whole of life soured and embittered and robs it of that optimism and childlike trust which Jesus Christ came to impart.

One other cause of children's fear of God should be mentioned, one which does come naturally to them, the fear of Him simply because He is unseen and mysterious. Children are often terrified of being left alone with God in the dark. "Is God in this room?" asked one small girl at night-time. "Open the door and let Him out."[2] Such fears

[1] Wodehouse, *op. cit.*, p. 9.
[2] Mumford, *The Dawn of Religion*, p. 25.

must be combated by steady teaching of the love and kindness of God, and by comparison of the parent's loving protection with His more loving and more powerful care. Such teaching was given by one father whose little girl was much afraid of dogs. Whenever she saw one coming she cried, "Daddy, pick me up," and once in his strong arms she feared nothing more. Her father says: "I tried to show her that whenever we are afraid of anything at all, that is just what we have to say to God, and what He will do with us."

Yet from this fear of the Unseen and Mysterious God comes later the feeling of awe and veneration without which the child's idea of God would be wholly inadequate and unworthy, a conception which has been described as a "suburban" idea of God. Otto finds the specifically religious instinct itself in this feeling of reverential awe and utter dependence. Both in teaching and in opportunities for worship this element must not be lacking, but must be given full expression; for in our Lord's teaching God was not only the Father in Heaven, but also Sovereign Lord and King of Kings, the God of Isaiah's vision in the Temple, "high and lifted up," before whom the seraphim cried

"Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of Hosts."

V

AUTHORITY AND OBEDIENCE

The problem of authority and freedom goes to the root of the whole idea of education and is one of the most vexed questions teachers have to decide. On one side are those who advocate the method of discovery, that the child should be left free to discover knowledge and experience for himself; on the other side are those who advocate the dogmatic method, the transmission, through instruction, of the racial heritage of wisdom and experience. Before the time of Rousseau, Pestalozzi and Froebel the latter method was the generally recognized means of teaching. These educational reformers emphasized the method of discovery as the only true method of education. To-day Montessori and her followers have shown with what ease and success children will teach themselves if given their freedom in a suitable environment. The teacher must entirely efface himself, must not try to influence the child at all. There was great need for the protests of these reformers; and their methods express an important truth, long forgotten, that development and growth must come from within. But in their enthusiasm for this aspect of education, which is undoubtedly the primary one, they have tended to become one-

sided in their views, and to forget that while growth comes from within, it receives its nourishment from without. Real gain is coming from the fact that teachers are now recognizing that authority and freedom are but the two complementary sides of all education worthy of the name. The teacher must no longer impose his personality upon the child's, neither can he, on the other hand, entirely sink and obliterate it. Truth still comes through personality, whether the teacher likes it or not. While the child is not a mere repository to be filled with useful knowledge, he will not have time, within the short span of a human life, to re-make all the experiments the race has made in the past. Authority has its part to play in the transmission of this racial experience and systematization. Children cannot be left to discover everything for themselves, especially in the early years when they are not old enough to choose wisely. The baby is not left to discover by experience the harmful effect of swallowing pins; they are forcibly removed from him. Such restraint is necessary and inevitable if he is to grow and develop at all. The small boy is not left to choose whether he shall be clean or not, or whether he will go to school; authority, in the guise of society, demands it. In the moral sphere he may not tell lies or beat the baby unchecked; authority has to prevent it, to show him that some things are right and some are wrong *in themselves* and not just because he chooses to think them so. Authority, then, has a due place in education, even if a subordinate one, especially in the early years.

What are the conditions of its wise and successful use ?

Firstly, its basis should be attraction and trust rather than compulsion. If " love is the law of the school," obedience to it will be much more fully and whole-heartedly rendered, even if at times its demands are high and stern, and its purposes not always explained. Medical psychology shows how essential is a sympathetic relationship between doctor and patient; it is no less so between teacher and pupil. The second necessary condition is truthfulness. Freud shows how one untruthful word from a father or mother may for ever undermine their child's trust in them. If the parent shows that his demand for obedience rests on the deeper demand of facts as they really are, of the truth that must be obeyed, it will become daily less questioned and more trusted. The third condition of successful authority is its reasonableness. Regular experience of the authority should show this to the child, rather than explanations of the reason for every command. The reasons for some things can be explained; others cannot be, especially to very young children. In such cases command and obedience must precede reason; the child must learn to obey simply because he is told to do so. This, however, makes it none the less desirable that experience should gradually show him the rational basis of authority, or that parents or teachers should, from time to time, have little talks with him, showing him how certain effects inevitably follow certain causes. They should

try to help him to understand that they, too, are under authority; that there are laws and ideals which they, too, must obey; that their authority is not arbitrary enforcement of their own irresponsible will, but of laws which God Himself has ordained and to which they are themselves submissive.

So far the teacher's exercise of authority has been mainly discussed, now the child's response to it must be considered. There are three ways in which he may re-act towards authority: (*a*) He may obey it as a son, his obedience influenced by affection, reason and trust; (*b*) he may obey as a slave, through fear or lack of initiative, so becoming ultra-suggestible and developing into an adult who is always swayed by the opinions of others; or (*c*) he may disobey and become a rebel against all authority, developing into a lawless and discontented adult. The first of these three alternatives is the one towards which parent or teacher must aim. How can it be attained? In the earliest years the child's own suggestibility is on the side of authority. Sully argues that a law-abiding impulse is fundamental in children and that the constant small collisions with the parents' authority occur when they feel this to be in opposition to the universal law of justice or love.[1] In support of this contention he refers to children's sense of remorse, to their imitation of their elders, to their demand for punctilious order in certain matters, and to their enforcement of these rules on younger brothers and sisters. Their objec-

[1] See *op. cit.*, pp. 277 f.

tion seems not to be to rule, but to misrule; they have a real respect for an authority which is just. If this respect is to remain and grow in strength, it is important that the rules of the home, of the community in which the child finds himself, should be consistently just and reasonable. Some rules there must be, in the life of any community: it could not continue to exist if each individual within it did exactly as he liked. Even games cannot be played unless the players agree to be bound by some rules. The very small child tends to be selfish and anti-social in his conduct, but soon common sense begins to show him that this is not wise, and does not pay; later a higher sense makes him feel that it is definitely wrong. A child who is consistently spoilt is in danger of growing up without learning that self-control which makes a law-abiding citizen, so that punishment he formerly escaped dogs his life. Probably it is a wise thing to have very few rules, but they should be strictly kept. In other matters the parent or teacher should avoid arbitrary or capricious interference. A distinction must be made between *social* laws, which must be obeyed for the sake of smooth working of home or school, and *moral* laws, which must be obeyed because they are right in themselves. The former ones should be perfectly clear and well known; some children will more readily obey a system than a person, and a list of rules pinned up in nursery or bedroom is obeyed with pride, or in the spirit of playing a good game, especially if the children can be shown how it prevents weariness, discomfort and worry for them-

selves and for other people. The success of such a system will depend on the thoroughness with which it is carried out. At night the mother might go through the list with her children, reviewing the success or failure of the day that is past and prophesying better things for the morrow. Gradually obedience to the rules will become habitual and the need for them will pass. With regard to the moral laws the aim should not be simply to make obedience to them habitual, but a transference from an outward to an inward obedience, a loyalty to what one's best self sees to be right. The old obedience has become a means to an end, the end freedom of the individual spirit to choose the good. The outward authority of parent or teacher gives place to the inward authority of the will. No habit of domination or love of power must prevent the one who has formerly exercised authority from standing aside that the child may come into his heritage of freedom. When the compulsion has at last become an inward instead of an outward one, then, and not till then, the child of grace should become free of the law. On the strength of this inward vision and impulse the reality and force of his religious life will depend.

Such a family training may prepare the child for a right relationship with his Father in Heaven and for his place in the family of God; for an obedience to laws framed by One who is wise and loving, in a life where fear is banished and confidence reigns, where no member of the family liveth to himself; until obedience finds its perfect fulfilment in an

insight which chooses the right because it sees how good and right it is, and in a confidence which trusts the Father when it cannot see, because in the past He has proved Himself worthy of trust.

This training should be aimed at, but human nature will not allow it to proceed without hindrance or set-back. While it is true that children have a law-abiding impulse they also have a self-assertive one which makes them chafe and rebel against an authority which thwarts their own desires. Yet if they are to be fitted for life they must be taught obedience and self-control, and without some kind of punishment, however slight, this is often not possible. At first sight this seems to be a limitation upon the child's freedom, but freedom is necessarily limited; the fire itself will limit the child's freedom to play with it indefinitely. Punishment, often swift and speedy, is Nature's way with those who break her laws. How far should it be man's way? In primitive life punishment was largely prompted by revenge, a good deal more than an eye for an eye or a tooth for a tooth was its motto. Against this conception of punishment the moral sense of mankind has revolted, yet anyone who punishes a child too severely and in anger is guilty of it still. It is probably a safe rule *never* to punish in anger, or because it gives satisfaction to the one who punishes. A higher conception of punishment is that which looks upon it as deterrent. While this may have some justification, it can have no great moral value, for it rests on fear. Such value as it

has is negative only. The highest conception of punishment is that which looks upon it as educative or restorative; pain of some kind is inflicted upon the culprit, but only that he may see the error of his ways by learning what is the natural and inevitable result of them, and so come to desire and attempt something better. If punishment is to have this beneficial result it must appear just to the child; he should be warned that such a penalty will follow such an offence. If he neglects the warning the punishment should follow without fail, quietly and without anger. The reasons for it should be made plain to the child; if it has been a social offence he can be shown that that is what will happen in this world to someone who makes a nuisance of himself; if it has been a moral offence he must be shown that punishment follows such conduct in the very nature of things; that "the way of transgressors is hard" is a necessary part of his education. As far as possible the teacher should let the punishment be a natural consequence of the deed. A baby who persistently throws its toys down to the floor should have them left there for a short time; a child who spills water should mop it up, a boy who covers himself with motor grease should be given rags and made to clean it, and so on. Sometimes to allow the child to persist in its disobedience will have this result; the mother may not take away the sharp knife but let the child go on playing with it, although forbidden, until it cuts itself, watching carefully meantime to see that no serious damage is done. When the punish-

ment fits the crime in such ways as this it is on the same plane as the offence and seems perfectly just to the child. There are occasions, however, when such a punishment is not possible. In that case, if it cannot be the result of the wrong doing it should be definitely related to it, as in the following instance:

"A little boy by his play in the family living-room had endangered a lighted lamp. He was repeatedly warned, but the play impulse overcame him, he forgot, and soon the lamp was overturned. Thereupon one of his parents, explaining to the little boy the danger of a poor memory, and pointing out that the little boy's own memory needed external help, administered sharp corporal punishment. It was for the sake of the future, not of the past; it represented a necessary order of things rather than an arbitrary will; it became to the child-consciousness at once an expression of his imperfect self and a means of helping him to realize a higher selfhood."[1]

The question of corporal punishment is a vexed one. Some teachers would abolish it entirely, and there is no doubt that it has many dangers. It may tend to brutalize the child and make him cruel to the small and weak. There seems little doubt that, if excessive, it sometimes causes premature sexual excitation, leading sometimes to self-flogging, sometimes to masturbation. Probably it should only be used very sparingly and when other means have failed. Then there does seem a place for it, as for

[1] Coe, *Education in Religion and Morals*, p. 142.

unpleasant medicines in sickness, and many inquiries have shown that children have not the dread of it, or resentment against it, that adults expect them to have.[1] There is a good deal of evidence that it has proved beneficial in very many cases.

Some teachers have abolished punishment altogether, as did Norman MacMunn in his school, except the punishment of heaping coals of fire. This is a method which no wise and loving parents or teachers will neglect. The mere look of pain or disappointment in their eyes is often enough to send a sensitive child away into a quiet place to hide its shame and distress. For this reason the punishment must fit the criminal as well as the crime. MacMunn says that it is a frequent happening for his boys to punish themselves for what they have done amiss. Sully tells of a little girl who had disobeyed her governess and punished herself by putting her left shoe on her right foot and her right shoe on her left foot![2]

But, whatever the method used, the child's attitude towards punishment should be that expressed in a boy's prayer written by a preparatory school headmaster:

"O God, if Jesus took proudly the cruel scourging and torture of brutal men for crimes which He had never done, teach us to pay without whimpering when pulled up for our faults, and not to make

[1] Cf. Earl Barnes, *Studies in Education.*

[2] Sully, *op. cit.*, p. 289.

excuses for ourselves which we should laugh at if made by others. If we have been punished, let us see that we get the good which punishment is meant to give. For His sake. Amen."[1]

[1] Grenfell, *Unconventional Prayers for Boys.*

VI

THE CHILD'S FREEDOM

Authority, it has been argued, holds a necessary place in child-life and training, but in all education worthy of the name obedience to it is a stage which must be largely outgrown. A man or woman who will not think, who follows slavishly the will of the majority and the judgment of the herd, is an uneducated man or woman. Teachers should not be satisfied until their pupils can keep an open mind, exercise an independent judgment, and, if necessary, be sufficiently courageous to stand alone in action. Such men and women are moral pioneers who lead their fellows forward into rich and undiscovered countries, who hear the high call of

> This main miracle that thou art thou
> With power on thine own act and on the world.

The necessary condition of such an attitude and such a work is freedom of the spirit; freedom to seek for, recognize and express truth, beauty and goodness as the individual himself sees them. In doing this he will not reject all the past experience of the human race, but instead of coming to him as heavy-handed and soul-deadening authority, it will

come as wellnigh overwhelming evidence. One of the most difficult things a teacher has to do is to stand aside when the time comes for this free expression of his pupil's spiritual activities; it is so much easier to tell what he wishes to be true, than to help the pupil to judge for himself what really is true. Here the emphasis of our modern education on the training and development of something within, rather than on the imposition of something from without, is a wholesome and even a religious one; "out of the heart are the issues of life."

Such free faculties and activities of the spirit will not spring up in one moment mature and ready-armed. They must develop and be trained and nourished from the earliest days; the freedom must be progressive. Because it is freedom of the spirit it need not clash with authority, for such freedom is not licence to do as one pleases, but to express the deeper demands of the soul. No one can do this without obedience, and self-restraint of lower impulses and desires. Where authority allies itself with the demands of the spirit it may encourage freedom instead of curtailing it, and its restraint will pass over into self-restraint. The teacher will aim at helping the child to choose the true, the good and the beautiful for their own sake, because he really prefers them. This builds up self-respect and makes use of the powerful self-regarding sentiment. The child rejoices to use the faculties which he is taught to believe he really possesses.

This principle has an important bearing on the

question of religious education. Since the general abandonment of the idea of the inborn depravity of all children, men have felt a new reverence for the natural and spontaneous tendencies for good in the souls of these little ones. They believe now that these tendencies can be fostered, that it is possible to help towards a growing spiritual appreciation, a developing insight into religious truth, a strengthening of will and character. How may this best be done?

It has been noted already that although growth comes from within it receives its nourishment from without. Hence it is necessary that the inward and the outward should be brought into contact, that the inner faculties should be stimulated to attend to outer things, to absorb them, to act upon them. The teacher's business is the provision of such stimulus, the encouragement of such attention, assimilation and expression. These will now be considered in this order.

Nature herself provides one great stimulus to attention to outer things and that is the stimulus of curiosity. Without this impulse to investigate what is new the child would never learn; in this sense Plato's saying that " Curiosity is the mother of all knowledge " is true. It produces attention, or concentration of activity, and interest, the feeling which accompanies it. It is practically certain that if no curiosity can be aroused in a new subject, all study of it will be futile. Curiosity is the force which urges the child on to fresh intellectual activity, to the satisfaction of an intellectual hunger. The

teacher's first step, then, in teaching anything new, is to try to arouse the child's curiosity about it. The progressive stages of curiosity in children have been classified as follows:

(a) *The Apperceptive.* "What is it?"
(b) *The Utilitarian.* "What is it for?"
(c) *The Scientific.* "How does it do it?"
(d) *The Philosophical.* "Why does it do it?"

Sully thinks that the child first makes really vigorous attempts to understand the things about him somewhere about the end of the third year and the beginning of the fourth.[1] Certainly the age of incessant and pertinacious questioning begins about this time. Many parents have shared Kipling's experience of his little daughter:

> She sends 'em abroad on her own affairs,
> From the second she opens her eyes—
> One million Hows, two million Whens,
> And seven million Whys!

Mothers and nurses often consider such ceaseless questioning to be done by the child as a studied means of annoyance. Undoubtedly there are times when it is a symptom of restless peevishness and is best dispelled by a romp or walk out of doors. This point of view, however, is less vividly held than formerly. The questions are now recognized to be the outcome of a form of mental craving, of demand for intellectual satisfaction. The demand

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 75.

is largely for fact, but often, too, a search for general laws or for origin and purpose. Where this is so it is best met by an open, patient and sincere response, which not only gives a satisfying answer to an immediate problem, but also leads to a right relationship between parent and child. Children will often ask questions which would puzzle the greatest sages; in such cases nothing is lost by the honest reply "I do not know." This is far better than the insincerity which gives a false answer, or the conceit which refuses to admit ignorance.

The search for origins, causes and purpose leads nearly all children to a theological curiosity. Here are some actual questions which express it: "Who made God?" "What was there before God?" "If I'd gone upstairs could God make it that I hadn't?" "Why doesn't God kill the devil?" [1] "Did God get to Heaven in an aeroplane?" "Who pours the water over Niagara Falls?" If no answer in the least degree satisfying is forthcoming to such questions the beginnings of religious doubt may be seen, even in very young children. It has been noted as early as the third and fourth years, and in later childhood it is frequently found. One instance may be given:

"I was in my eighth year when, one evening, a song which my grandmother had sung before going to bed roused such thoughts that I could not sleep all night. . . . The most refined atheistic notions coursed through my soul." [2]

[1] Cf. Sully, *op. cit.*, pp. 85 f.

[2] F. Bovet, *Le Comte de Zinzendorf*, I., p. 21.

Miracles and other supernatural stories cause widespread doubt among older children, especially when the age of imagination is passing and a wider experience of life is showing what does or does not pass beyond the bounds of probability. Such a period of doubt is frequent between about eight and twelve years of age, when the old faith in fairies and Santa Claus has passed and before the capacity to see the truth underlying such stories has developed. These children need much patient sympathy and understanding, encouragement to talk over their difficulties frankly. Above all they must be shown now that it is their duty to think as hard as they can and that no one will shrink from telling them the truth. Any deception or evasion at this time may be fatal to a reasoned and truth-loving faith later. It is probably wiser to omit, as far as possible, at this time, stories containing much of the supernatural element. This cannot, however, be entirely banished or postponed. After many a Bible story the child will ask: "Is that story true?" "Did it really happen like that?" While it is hardly possible to explain the full critical interpretation and conclusions to a child of nine or ten years of age who has, as yet, insufficient mental equipment for their understanding, it is possible to give the right point of view and the right method of approach; free, unfettered and expectant. One can show how God taught men as the children themselves are taught, by degrees and as they were able to bear it. In answer to the question, "Is that a true story?" some such answer as this may be given: "Do

you know *The Pilgrim's Progress?* Is it true? Things did not happen just like that, and yet it is one of the truest stories in the world. Jesus told many stories like that, ' The Good Samaritan,' ' The Lost Sheep,' ' The Prodigal Son,' and others. Were they true? Which part of them is true? *The meaning is true.* Let us see what is the true meaning of this story." Children taught in this way will have nothing to unlearn, the truth will make them free. Religious education must be of the kind which makes them seek truth and pursue it, for its own sake, because only in truth can their souls rest. It must aim at developing those reasoning powers which can think God's thoughts after Him, albeit afar off; which see the effect in the cause, discern the great principle of continuity running through life, so that one can say, not only with faith but also with some degree of insight, that all things work together for good to those that love God.

While curiosity is the stimulus which stirs children to take notice of outer things, and interest the emotion which accompanies it, attention is the outcome of them both. It is necessary to distinguish between the two kinds of attention ; involuntary or spontaneous attention which we give apart altogether from our wills, and voluntary attention which we give in order to reach some end. For example, a student may be writing a difficult essay on a subject in which he is not naturally interested. The front-door bell rings, and immediately his thoughts wander from the essay to the person at the door; the

voluntary attention has given place to the involuntary. If, however, he sticks to his work until he grasps the principle behind it, or sees it from some new and fascinating standpoint, the voluntary attention may become spontaneous and he will be so much absorbed that next time the front-door bell rings he will not even hear it. Interest is thus the condition of whole-hearted attention. The interest, however, need not be of the immediate and obvious kind. The essay may be a necessary step in getting a degree and fitting the student for his life-work, in which case interest in a remote end will make prolonged attention possible, even when the immediate work is difficult and uncongenial. This habit of concentration, for the sake of a remote end, is only gradually formed. A small child finds it difficult to work for anything but an immediate end, although the teacher will aim at helping him to place his aims at an ever-increasing distance, to widen continually the circle of his interests. While attention is not possible without some kind of interest, the interest which has any educational value is not that which simply amuses the child, but the kind which makes him put forth some real effort to attain a definite end. The child must be trained to attend to unattractive things ; this does not mean, however, that attention can be divorced from interest, but only that the interest is of a deeper and more remote kind, the child henceforth " takes an interest " in that subject. In infancy and early childhood, it must be admitted, this capacity is practically non-existent. Attention can only be gained by spontaneous interest, which

has its origin in the instincts, such as imitation, sense-satisfaction, imagination, curiosity, desire for recognition, self-assertion and self-preservation, desire for love, and so on. In gaining the child's attention the teacher must begin by exciting these instinctive interests, and by building on these lead him on to wider interests connected with them, associating the new with the old in some natural and telling way. Some teachers oppose this idea of education through the interests because they believe it makes things so easy that all necessity for effort is abolished and so character suffers. But in practice this is not so ; it is the uninterested children, not the interested ones, who dawdle over their work and put no effort into it. Study of the lives of great men suggests that those work hardest and go farthest whose work has for them an absorbing interest. Where children are taken from the work which naturally interests them, not only is there grave danger of the psychological disorders which follow repression, but men of genius may be lost to the world, for whom a number of persevering " machine-minds " are but a poor substitute. As an instance of the high degree of concentration which an intense interest will cause in children Sully tells of a little boy, only two years and eleven months old, much interested in railways, who travelled on two railways in the one day and then asked his mother if she had noticed the difference in the make of the rails on the two lines, a difference which existed in fact, but which was hardly noticeable even when pointed out.[1]

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 68.

Such interests are usually connected with the child's abilities. We like the things we can do best. The wise teacher will utilize such interests, striving always to widen them, to make them purposive and persistent, even in face of difficulties, so that neither native ability nor strength of character shall suffer. These principles hold good in religious as in general education. Their application to the interests of the different periods of child-life will be found in the last chapter.

Another side of the question must now be noted. Where interests are assured and emotions kindled, unless they can find some practical outlet they are not only useless but positively harmful. At some time they should express themselves in action. Our Lord taught that it is not the man who hears His words alone, but the man who hears and *does* them who builds his house on a rock. The exercise of a function is a necessary part of its training; apart from this it will atrophy. Such exercise should be real self-activity, entered into with spontaneity and zest. Of late years many interesting educational experiments by Montessori, MacMunn, Dewey, and others have shown the astonishing progress that children will make when left free to express themselves in their own way. The freedom is not absolute, in so much as it is freedom in a controlled environment, but that is its only limitation. MacMunn tells his boys that they are free to walk about and get things, to choose the subject at which they will work. He tells them that he believes that work and play are the same thing, that they must help

him to prove it. His boys write and act their own plays and make their own scenery.[1] Montessori provides elaborate sets of apparatus by which little children largely teach themselves ; the teacher sits quietly in the room until individual children come and appeal for help or information.[2] There can be no doubt that these methods encourage native ability and initiative. Because they are allied with the child's interests they call forth all his energies. Those who have had any experience of these self-teaching methods can have little doubt that they should find some place in every educational scheme. But not every one would feel that they should have exclusive possession ; that all external influence or interference should be abolished. Is the teacher to exercise no restraint over selfish, cruel or sensual impulses? Some followers of Freud, with their fear of repression, would go as far as this ; further than Freud himself would go. But the unrestrained expression of all the lower impulses causes repression of a more serious kind, repression of the moral sense, of the spirit in man. There is ample evidence of the hysteria and neuroses following such a line of action. And apart altogether from the question of restraint, there must always be a place in education for impression, for leadership and for the influence of the mature mind upon the immature.

In religious education the importance of impression has long been recognized, that of expression

[1] See *The Child's Path to Freedom.*
[2] See *The Montessori Method.*

has been overlooked. Sermons and lessons have been impressive; they have often failed to stir those who heard them to apply the truth they contained. This has been one of the greatest weaknesses of preaching and of religious education in general. Attempts are now being made, by reformers interested in this work, to remedy this defect. Self-teaching methods have been introduced into the Sunday School, by means of pictures, study-cards and self-teaching guides. They have met with marked success.[1] Other schools have put aside the part of the session which follows the lesson as "Expression-Time," when the children, by drawing, writing, handwork or dramatization, express, at any rate partially, the truth they have heard. I have been convinced by a wide experience of the very great value of such work, for purposes of re-impression, revision, correction and expression. The following imaginary letter was written by a boy of eleven, after the Easter lesson :

> Dear Dorothy,—Our Blessed Captain Jesus Christ is dead, but tho' he is I can see his flashing eyes, his sturdy countenance and his strapping figure. I can also hear his humble and favourite words, "Love ye one another." Why I think Jesus Christ is with me is because I don't think I should be frightened to die for him and I should be like Peter.—Yours truly,
>
> Donald.

No honest boy could think out and write a letter

[1] See Holland, *Self-Teaching in the Sunday School.*

like that without really learning something fine and good, and although such expression is very limited and incomplete, it may, and probably does, lead to that incarnation of the Christ-spirit which will call for expression in all life. With nothing short of that can the teacher be satisfied.

VII

TRAINING THE MEMORY IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

MEMORIZING has been one of the favourite methods of religious education in the past, and although modern psychological research suggests that it should be greatly changed in form it does nothing to diminish its value. In its widest sense, as the conversation and use of past experience, the value of memory can hardly be over-estimated. Without it there might be repetition, there could hardly be advance. Generally we use the term in its limited sense of the effort to recall some particular thing, but this is just one aspect of memory.

Bergson, in his *Matter and Memory*, distinguishes two types of memory: (*a*) simple memory, as of an event which happened the day before—this we may call pure memory ; and (*b*) memory of something which remains in our mind, by dint of much repetition—this we may call habit memory. This may function entirely without understanding, in the ordinary sense of the term, it can be purely mechanical. It has been far too much used in the past, as in the unthinking repetition of catechism or creed, or the rhythmical chanting of the contents of sacred books in the East. But experience has shown that

where the matter to be memorized has been understood, *i.e.*, in pure memory, it is acquired with very few repetitions and much more quickly. Anyone can prove this to his satisfaction by timing how long it takes him to memorize three sensible one-line sentences compared with that required for three lines of nonsense syllables. In spite of that habit memory has its place, though a subordinate one. It must be used in memorizing the multiplication-table, vocabularies of a foreign language, the actual words of great poems or passages of prose.

Yet, even here, the understanding may come to its aid and pure memory be allied with it. If this is not done, there will be much time wasted, much weariness and boredom caused, and much mental energy used up which should be kept for higher things. These considerations have made some teachers deny the use of mechanical memory altogether, but as a tool, as a means to an end, it has a real value. Systematic experiments in memory have been made by Hermann Ebbinghaus, largely by collections of nonsense syllables, which were learnt and then rehearsed after some time had elapsed. He has proved by these experiments that although the learner was quite unable to recognize the list a second time, yet there was then, in learning it, a distinct saving in time and in the number of repetitions compared with the first. Rhyme, rhythm, and music are valuable aids in this mechanical memory work, which is probably why so many primitive laws and stories were presented in these forms.

Pure or intellectual memory goes beneath the words to the underlying meaning or principles. When it reproduces, it reproduces not the form but the meaning or sense of the thing learnt. The mental associations by which this is recalled are not those of mere contiguity, but those of logical connexion, organized and presented in a new and original way. Pure memory cannot be separated from understanding; here lies the psychological justification for the rejection of habit memory as the sole method of learning and remembering.

In the process of memory there are three stages: impression, retention, and reproduction. In attempting to train it some understanding of the laws governing these is essential. Those governing impressions will now be considered.

Firstly, it is important to choose a time for the work when the pupil is not tired. Memorizing is not physically an easy and effortless matter, it calls for a fresh and vigorous brain. Probably the morning is the best time to begin it, although a repetition of it last thing at night will help to ingrain it and to give the unconscious mind the opportunity of absorbing it during sleep. Matter learnt in a fatigued state is, on the other hand, learnt with additional labour and very quickly forgotten. Because it is tiring work, memorizing should be done in several spells of a few minutes each, rather than in one long lesson.

Primacy, popularly expressed in the saying "first impressions are lasting," is another condition of permanent impression. The associations, pleasant or

the reverse, which a new idea makes in the mind, are usually so vivid that they remain as part of it when no logical reason can be given that they should. Hence the importance for education that first impressions of a subject should be just and pleasurable ones. If this is not so future attempts at teaching may be wholly distorted. This consideration of vivid impressions leads on to the question of the effect of the emotional state during which they are made. Those received with marked interest, pleasure or pain are generally more lasting than those which called forth little or no emotional response. The strength of the emotion may blur the details of the thing remembered, but the main impression and meaning of it lives on. Two extreme inferences are made by some psychologists from these facts—(*a*) that strong emotions should be worked up before memory work is attempted, or (*b*) that it should only be done in a cool, calm frame of mind, lest the facts become distorted by strong feeling. Common sense is the teacher's best guide here ; it will teach him to avoid these extremes while bearing the facts in mind, to avoid artificial stimulation of emotion or its uncontrolled expression, to stir that which is really inherent in the subject-matter of the lesson, and in all legitimate interest. Interest itself is the emotional state which makes the best preparation for a memory-impression ; the teacher's first step should be to arouse it. Most people remember with ease facts connected with the subject in which they are specially interested ; the miser is all attention when money is mentioned, the ardent cricketer when

he hears the result of an important match. Such interest provides a ready means of entrance for new ideas, the teacher has won half the battle in teaching a subject if the pupil's interest can be aroused first. Certainly memory work should not be attempted without it.

If the pupil is to be interested in the matter to be memorized, he must of necessity understand something, though not necessarily all, of it. While it is quite legitimate to teach something which yearly becomes more full of truth and beauty, it should also have some immediate meaning and interest for the child as a child. If it has not it produces several undesirable consequences : boredom, fatigue, misery, hatred of the subject itself. Difficulties in understanding may arise either in the subject, or in the language in which it is presented. The former may be obviated by avoiding those subjects which can in no way have entered into the child's experience, unless they can be intimately connected with that experience. In dealing with the language difficulty, much may be done by discussing the difficult terms before the poem or other material to be learnt is presented at all. No harm will be done if one or two words are beyond his immediate and entire understanding, provided that the meaning of the thing as a whole is clear.

In the actual presentation of the material it should be remembered that it may be either visual or auditory, or both. People differ very much in this respect. Alfred Binet once tested the memories of two " lightning-calculators," and found that the

memory of the one was almost entirely visual, while that of the other was auditory.[1] Probably the best way to help a class of children to remember is to let them see the poem or other matter to be learnt, to let them listen to it well read, and then to repeat it audibly themselves.

Experiments have shown that a short poem is best learnt as a whole than by dividing it up into separate stanzas. If but one verse or stanza is learnt an association is set up between the last and first words in repetition which is inaccurate and disturbing when the poem is repeated as a whole. This also applies to longer poems or narratives ; the learner is apt to be appalled by the amount to be memorized and tries to do a small part at a time, but experimental tests have shown that actually this method takes longer than learning by reading the whole thing through once or twice a day. It follows that the best things to give children for memory work are those short enough to be learnt as a whole in one sitting. Where longer pieces must be learnt it is advisable to read through the whole thing first and then to memorize a part which is more or less satisfactorily complete in itself, as an act or a scene, though part of a play, is in one sense a short and complete unity.

When once the impression is made the question of retention arises. It is doubtful whether any impression once made is ever really forgotten. Professor Ward thinks each one remains as part of the whole life, as every blade of grass helps to make the

[1] See Ogden, *Psychology and Education*, p. 215.

world green ; but this cannot be proved. It is certain that some things are forgotten for a while to come to mind again, while others disappear from consciousness for ever. While this sometimes occasions annoyance it is really a gain. A mind that retained everything would be like a museum crowded with lumber, learned and unlearned. As it is the unimportant is forgotten, and if sometimes something important is forgotten it is generally because its importance was not recognized at first. Freud asserts that forgetfulness is often purposive ; people forget things that they do not want to remember, that have disagreeable associations, such as appointments with the dentist. The teacher who wishes a thing to be remembered will see that it is not presented with disagreeable associations, such as boredom, threats, and punishment. If these things cause forgetfulness, what are the things that make for retentiveness? Given a vivid impression, repetition and revision are the two most important. The experiment of Ebbinghaus, described above, shows the value of repetition, even when only purely mechanical. The oftener a thing is recalled and repeated the more likely it is to be permanently retained, especially if this is done with intelligence and pleasure. Revision should be frequent at first, with longer and longer intervals elapsing between each revision ; for Ebbinghaus has shown in another experiment that an impression fades rapidly during the first half-hour after it is made, then fairly rapidly for the first day, and after that very slowly indeed.[1] Experi-

[1] See Ogden, *Psychology and Education*, p. 209.

ments also go to prove that while the power to learn steadily increases up to about twenty-five years of age, the power to retain decreases after the age of twelve. This probably accounts for the fact that memories of childhood are clear in extreme old age, when most subsequent ones have vanished, This being so, it is of the highest importance that matter memorized in childhood should be worthy of being permanent furniture of the mind.

The power to recall a memory must be distinguished from the power to retain it, for often one cannot recall something which a few days later spontaneously comes back to consciousness from the depths where it has been retained. It is important, then, to know what are the factors favouring recall. The " Law of Association of Ideas " has long been considered the most important of these ; an idea associated with another idea during its impression will tend to recall the other idea when it is itself recalled. While much truth underlies this law, it has distinct limitations. Obviously many details which were part of the original impression have been unnoted or weeded out as irrelevant, they are never recalled at all. Professor Ogden, following the " Gestalt " psychology, argues very convincingly that only those ideas are recalled by association which have " entered into a configuration " and " become joined by virtue of their membership in a whole." The whole pattern or system is what is remembered, until displaced by a later configuration.[1]

[1] *Note.*—" Configuration " is Prof. Ogden's word for the distinctive feature of the " Gestalt " psychology. See pp. 184 f.

Purpose is also a factor favouring recall. One remembers those parts of a previous impression which will be of special interest to the person with whom one happens to be talking at the moment, or which are applicable to the matter in hand. This is especially true of intellectual memory and it is this selective and purposive kind that one should try to develop in children.

These principles have a direct bearing on the question of religious education. So much of it in the past has consisted entirely in the memorizing of creed, catechism, psalms, hymns, selected passages of Scripture. Understanding of them was a secondary or non-existent consideration. It was argued that the children's memories were good, that this memorizing was good discipline, that later these forms would become filled with meaning and vitally alive. Unfortunately this desirable result does not seem to have followed in the majority of cases. Indeed, all the balance of testimony is the other way. These reminiscences are typical of it:

"The torture inflicted in learning, or in fearing that you have not learnt it, prejudices the sufferer against that particular passage for the rest of his life."
"Friday morning was terrible. For people with a poor memory for psalms, etc., it was almost as bad as a nightmare. We never had the slightest idea what the repetition meant, and we were all terrified at not being able to say it when we were asked."
"I think I can say with truth that my religious training at school was of practically no value to me except that I now know a few hymns and verses by

heart, and these I hate because I was so miserable when learning them."[1]

Where this learning by heart is simply a question of unmeaning repetition, some extraordinary results are produced. Sully tells of one little boy whose first repetition of the Lord's Prayer was "Harold by Thy Name!"[2] Another child thought for years of "Our Father '*witchard*' in Heaven," as a cross between a witch and a wizard. Hymns as well as prayers suffer in this way: one child was heard singing lustily:—

> Dare to be a spaniel (Daniel),
> Dare to stand alone,
> Dare to have a purple spine (purpose firm)
> And dare to make it known![3]

Results such as these do not suggest that the method producing them is likely to further the cause of true religion. On the other hand, there are the undeniable facts that during the War many soldiers testified to the value of memories of hymns sung in their childhood in Sunday School, and that often in the dark crises of later life noble and inspiring passages or verses flash from out the darkened, half-forgotten corners of the mind with direct inspiration, comfort, and strength. It may be urged here that psychologically these results are more, not less, likely to follow, where the learning has been done with interest, pleasure and some measure of understanding. This will avoid the disaster of fixing some

[1] Wodehouse, *The Scripture Lesson in the Elementary School*, pp. 59, 60.

[2] Sully, *op. cit.*, p. 185.

[3] See Tanner, *The Child*, p. 154.

of the noblest utterances of the human spirit as wearisome and mechanical forms in the children's minds. Here again the possibilities of abuse should not mean misuse. Memory work must still have a large place in religious teaching; it should aim at helping all children to acquire the Beatitudes, some of the Psalms and other great Scripture passages, and some noble Christian poems of later days, before the twelfth year. These should be taught in the light of the psychological principles outlined above ; when the children are unfatigued, with happy and beautiful associations, with interest and some immediate intellectual and practical value, with visual and auditory impression, appreciative repetition and careful revision. Children trained in such a way would carry with them a faculty and a possession whose value would but grow and deepen with the passing of the years.

VIII

TRAINING IN MORALITY

The question of the relationship between morality and religion, if any, is one in which it is hopeless to look for anything like unanimity among teachers. Some maintain that the two are inseparable, others that they are entirely distinct, others again that they are interdependent in some respects while totally divorced in others. Historically they have often had no connexion with each other, as in certain forms of animism and of Hinduism, and as in ancient Greece, where advanced codes of ethics could exist side by side with worship of gods whose actions were flagrantly immoral. Some teachers still insist that morality must be taught quite apart from any theological sanction. But it was the glory of Christianity and of its predecessor, the religion of the Hebrew prophets, that they insisted that religion and morality were but two aspects of the same question ; that their religion was the worship of a moral God who made moral demands, that their morality was heightened, illuminated and empowered by the religion which gave it all its motive force. It may be admitted that it is possible to teach and practise a certain amount of morality without religion, but true religion

without morality is impossible. This is a Christian presupposition which need hardly be argued. Some training in morality is a necessary part of Christian education, if morality is a thing which can be developed by training, which some would deny. Here some careful records kept by the Glasgow Municipal authorities offer valuable evidence. Of 630 children taken from the worst homes of Glasgow while still very young, and sent to be brought up in respectable country homes, only twenty-three were found to have gone wrong after years of careful observation. Dr Barnardo has given similar evidence of the effect of moral training on an immoral stock.[1] One cannot, however, develop and train a thing which does not exist, at least in germ. Have children the germ of any such moral instinct, or is morality something imposed on them, by education, from outside themselves?

At birth, of course, the child has no more an innate idea of morality than he has an innate idea of any other subject. This does not prove, however, that there is no such thing as the moral instinct, any more than that there is no such thing as the sex-instinct, because it does not immediately make its demands known. What does exist at birth is the raw material of morality, in that the child is born with physical sensations and desires, with a nature and in a society which will make demands upon him that will later conflict with these purely physical instincts. In the first months the child knows

[1] See *Moral Instruction and Training in Schools*, p. 36.

pleasure and pain, he cannot know right and wrong, for he is as yet unconscious of these other demands. His physical tendencies are neither moral nor immoral, but morally neutral, full of possibilities of good or evil, which can only be realized by knowledge and by will. These passions and impulses are at first centred in self and know no restraint but satiety. But very soon come restraints from outside, in ways which were noticed in the chapter on "Suggestion." For the little child the right becomes what is permitted, the wrong what is forbidden; custom is the beginning of morality, though still far from morality proper. Through the warp of the child's own desires and actions runs the weft of the desires and actions of others, and the pattern is altered, not without pain and anger, fierce opposition and passionate outbursts. Yet even here Sully distinguishes this opposition from the sensual rage of thwarted animals; the child, he says, suffers consciously because he realizes himself to be in antagonism to the world about, his self-regarding instinct has suffered rebuff. The desire for the approval of others very soon becomes a powerful aid to right action. He may not understand at first why his mother calls him "good" when he does certain things, and "naughty" when he does others, but in so far as justice and love inspire all her dealings with him, the ideas of right and wrong begin to have some real meaning for him. From one follows pleasure, from the other follows pain, and these not only from without, but also within him-

self. The following incident illustrates such a process :

" One day I was looking after my friend's small daughter, a babe of just two. Her mother had always tried to train her to share whatever was given to her. . . . I had some chocolates wrapped in silver paper. . . . Giving her two, I told her to take one to Ada, the maid, and have the other herself. She hesitated a moment, and then said, ' No, no one for Ada.' Fearing that if I insisted she might begin to cry and cause a scene, I said, ' All right ; give me a kiss instead.' But she replied, ' No, no kiss.' After standing still for a second, she suddenly turned and walked to the window. She stood there several minutes with her back to me, one chocolate in each hand, looking at them intently. Suddenly, without saying a word, she turned and ran out of the room and into the kitchen, where I heard her telling Ada that she had brought her a chocolate. Returning, she said to me. ' *Now* I kiss you.' " [1]

With the gradual widening of the child's human circle that comes with schooldays the moral demands widen also. Society, a companionship either human or divine, is necessary to the growth of the moral sense. At school the child begins to delight in the corporate life, which may do so much to develop this. The wise teacher will use his pupil's regard for public opinion and social approval as an instrument at times far more potent than his own individual influence may be. The child whose work has been carelessly done will often learn much when it is shown to the

[1] Wodehouse, *op. cit.*, p. 1.

other children for their opinion upon it and suggestions for its improvement, although this method is more suitable for the young rebel than for the sensitive child. Norman MacMunn tells how he would deal with a boy whose conduct was in any way anti-social. At first he would ask the offender, in a friendly way, why he liked doing that particular thing; he would then propose that the class should vote on whether the rest of them should also do it. This voting generally left the original culprit in a minority of one. "I have never known a boy of preparatory school age who did not abandon an anti-social line of conduct on hearing the result of this vote," says MacMunn.[1] This same moral force of social approval or disapproval can be seen working in the school corps of a day-school, a good house in a boarding-school, in all team-games. The children come to understand that success depends on the effort and loyal co-operation of each individual member, that the failure of one is the failure of all, that there is a call for self-sacrifice, fidelity, loyalty. They learn that a "slacker" will spoil everything and that discipline is a sheer necessity, above all discipline of themselves. It is possible to help them to see that Life, too, is a game; a game with rules which must be kept, where they can play their part like men, where every player counts. This involves both negative and positive morality; the elimination of faults and weaknesses and the positive striving for the good of others as well as of oneself. On the negative side, while children may exhibit most of the

[1] MacMunn, *The Child's Path to Freedom*, pp. 65-66.

faults and anti-social tendencies of adults, there are some to which they are specially prone. These are generally recognized as passionate anger, lying, cruelty, disobedience and selfishness. Of these the question of disobedience has already been discussed. Caution is necessary in dealing with these unlovely traits in children, in treating them as if they had the same meaning and gravity as when seen in adults. To do so is to ignore altogether the facts of moral growth, of development of knowledge and insight; to treat immaturity as if it were decay, a stupid blunder which no teacher should allow himself to make.

Sometimes the alarmed parent considers his child's outburst of passionate anger as a sign of moral degeneracy, and the hitting, kicking, screaming, biting little creature seems to justify the thought. Darwin's son did all these things when only two years and three months old, thus giving vent to a childish impulse when his imperious will was thwarted. The parent must not be unduly alarmed at these sudden bursts of fury, but must recognize them as manifestations of a natural instinct, which must be trained to control and to service in righteous causes. While selfish, uncontrolled anger does so much to destroy the happiness of oneself and of others, few good causes would triumph without the energy generated by righteous indignation at the oppression and wrongs of others, an indignation which the example of Jesus Christ shows us is an element in the highest human character. The instinct, then, must not be suppressed, but con-

trolled and guided. One boy of eleven, who had been trained in absolute non-resistance, had to be escorted daily to school by his mother or a maid, so that his schoolmates should not impose upon him.[1] Such a boy would hardly make a valuable Christian citizen. If control of the anger-impulse, rather than its suppression, is to be aimed at, how can this be done? It should be remembered that the oftener the impulse is stimulated the more it dominates the child; prevention is therefore one of the best cures, the avoidance of things which irritate and annoy, the exercise of the same tact which one would use in dealing with an adult who happened to be tired or nervous. Even then it must needs be that offences come; here, again, loving tact may do much in turning the child's attention away from the cause of the trouble, or in ignoring him altogether, as if just at that time, he were not worthy of notice or attention. It should never be forgotten that illness is often a cause of bad temper in children; here, of course, physical care and not punishment is the right treatment. At all times the parent or teacher must avoid anger or temper in dealing with the angry child; if the angry mother cries, "Hold your tongue!" it is hardly reasonable to whip the child for impertinence when he answers, "Hold yours!" When a paroxysm of rage is so violent that it is physically harmful or dangerous to the child, the apparently drastic remedy of suddenly dashing cold water in his face has at times proved really valuable. The element of surprise, combined with a slight

[1] See St John, *Child Nature and Child Nurture*, p. 51.

touch of fear, checks the angry outburst; if not done as a punishment, but as a means of diverting the mind. Probably the best treatment of all is in allowing another form of expression, when the parent listens patiently to the child's side of the dispute. Furious outbursts of anger are much more common in cases where this relief is not possible, as with children who are not yet old enough to speak, or with deaf-mutes. The child is happiest who knows that he will be able to tell his father or mother or teacher all about the trouble, in the sure knowledge of finding both justice and mercy.

Another of the anti-social traits of children, which often greatly distresses their elders, is their cruelty; this showing itself not only in an apparently callous indifference to pain and distress in others, which is almost certainly due to ignorance, but in the actual infliction of pain, on younger children, or (more commonly) on animals or insects. The child who crushed the fly on the window-pane, saying, "Little fly, go to Jesus," was doing, although perhaps not saying, a very common thing. Most of this active cruelty, also, is done in ignorance of the suffering it causes; some of it is due to love of power, in checking the movements of these weaker things, some is the result of curiosity about how the creature is made, what it is like inside or what it will do when its progress is checked. So Ruskin tells how he pulled flowers to pieces when a child, not in destructive mood, but in admiring wonder.[1] One of the first steps in training the child towards kindness to

[1] *Præterita*, p. 88.

weaker things is to try to get him to understand something of the pain he is causing, either by imaginative stories, true and not over-coloured, or by allowing the child to feel himself something that he has made another feel, as in letting him go without a meal if he has not fed his pet rabbits. Much can be taught by example of kindness, by stimulating a scientific interest, as in Nature-study, and by the gift and care of pets, or by feeding birds in winter. The child should be told how Jesus felt pity for a lamb that was lost and admired the man who would go to seek it, or the man who would rescue his ass from a pit on the Sabbath Day, how He watched the foxes find their holes on the hillside, how He loved wild flowers, and how He believed that not one little sparrow was killed by a flying stone but that the Father in Heaven knew and cared.

Another social obligation where children often fail is in telling the truth. They have not learnt the social effect of a lie; it is a means of defence for themselves. A distinction must be made between intentional and unintentional lying. Much of the latter is due to a vivid imagination and to an inability to distinguish between fact and fancy, between the real and the ideal worlds. This aspect of lying is often due to playful fancy, to an impulse to astonish, to please, to avoid giving offence. When these are simply part of an "infant comedy," as Sully calls it, they may be received in the same playful spirit of fun. If they are taken seriously, and wilful untruthfulness attributed to the child, the suggestion is a baneful one. On the other hand, real intention to deceive must not be

overlooked. This kind of lie is generally caused by fear of discovery and punishment, rather than by any baser motive. Often these lies are followed by hours of bitter remorse, the memory of which remains throughout life. Sully concludes from the evidence before him that the habit of lying is largely contracted from untruthful adults and is rare in children brought up in an atmosphere of truth.[1] When the child has lied from fear of punishment the great essential is to help him to have courage to face the consequences of his acts, rather than escape from them. Gradually, as he is able to understand, he can be helped to see that there can be no satisfactory intercourse between himself and others, save on the basis of truth; and no peace and strength in life apart from facing facts as they are and conquering them.

Since unselfishness and altruism is the last and hardest lesson souls have to learn, and since children are only beginning to walk through the vale of soul-making, one cannot wonder that selfishness and self-centredness are childish characteristics. Two things must be aimed at here : (*a*) this self-regarding sentiment can be sublimated and become a powerful aid towards morality, and (*b*) children can be gradually educated to take an interest in an ever-widening circle of people and to help them to the best of their ability.

(*a*) A small child is swayed and mastered by every passing impulse and only learns slowly and

[1] See Sully, *op. cit.*, p. 264.

with difficulty the subordination of these to the good of the self as a whole. Before this can be done the conceptions of the self and of happiness have to be formed to some extent. The teacher must help the children to form these and to subdue their impulses for the sake of these higher ends. The kind of idea they have of themselves, and that the teachers show they have of them, is of the greatest importance. A boy who thinks of himself as truthful, honest and courageous will be much ashamed if he gives way to lying or cowardice, while a "bad lad" will take pride in living up to his reputation. The wise teacher will show that he hopes and believes the best and will appeal to such motives as the thirst for heroism or desire to be thought manly: "that is unworthy of you" will be his line of appeal. Such a training in self-mastery, for the happiness of the whole self, leads to a prudential morality which, while not the highest form of morality, is by no means to be despised.

(*b*) A higher sanction is the social or altruistic one. Even the little child is not entirely without the germs of such feeling towards those to whom he is bound by sympathetic ties. At first such sympathy is largely imitative, as when a baby cries when it sees its mother pretend to cry, or pretends to have the disease from which its playmate is suffering. This imitative action is a step towards a better understanding of the other person's point of view, and such dramatic play of a situation is a very good way of arousing children's sympathy with it. Caring for

pets or dolls is valuable for the same reason. Most children seem to show an instinctive sympathy with, and championship of, the weaker party, and are indignant at the doings of the butcher or the huntsman. They do not readily rejoice in another's joy and are much more likely to be envious of it ; so that it is a necessary part of their moral training that they should be encouraged to increase happiness as well as to alleviate distress. In their relationships with other children fair play and generosity are the things to be aimed at, by treating them with scrupulous impartiality, by checking any unfairness on their part and by encouraging a generous unselfishness. This is difficult, but it can be done; something from within the child himself responds to it. One mother had tried for some time, without success, to get her little five-year-old son to share a cherished toy with a younger sister. Suddenly he gave it up and burst out laughing, saying, " I heard a voice inside me say, all of a sudden, ' Give it her, give it her.' "[1]

In their relationship with adults, children's natural desire to help in little ways should not be suppressed, but fostered. A busy mother or teacher will often find this a trial of patience, but later will reap the reward of it. It is by such small and spasmodic efforts that children gradually learn to become really useful members of society; indeed, it is wise, not only to accept such offers of service when they are made but also to request them from time to time, for the sake of the children themselves.

[1] Mumford, *The Dawn of Character*, p. 89.

In trying to arouse children's sympathy with, and desire to help, persons beyond the immediate home circle certain things should be kept in mind. One is that real sympathy presupposes knowledge ; another that it is unwise to stimulate an emotion which cannot find some speedy practical outlet ; another that children's sympathy goes out best towards those who have the same interests as themselves.

The missionary motive is the expression of the altruistic instinct in the sphere of religion. In all missionary teaching in home or school these three principles should be borne in mind. (1) Since sympathy presupposes knowledge, a vague exhortation to give to, or pray for, " the heathen " is quite useless. Instead, by means of pictures, curios and stories, some real knowledge of these other peoples in work and play, home and school, must be given; also some knowledge of how it is possible for Christian people to help them, in ways which children can comprehend as help of a valuable kind. (2) Since it is unwise to stimulate an emotion which cannot find some speedy practical outlet, an opportunity for this must be given after any missionary lesson. A " missionary-collection " does not provide this, since the money is not often the gift of the children themselves. Instead they should be encouraged to bring or make toys for the little Chinese or Indian children, or to make articles to be sold at a small sale, the proceeds of which can go to help work in the special place about which they have been hearing. (3) Since children's sympathy goes out best to those who have the same interests as themselves, it follows that the

teaching about other countries should be largely about the lives of the children in them and not about the spiritual experiences of adults.

So far morality has been considered in connection with personal well-being or with social demand, but there is a higher sanction still, the inward demand that right shall be done for its own sake. It is in meeting this demand that morality ceases to be conventional and becomes spiritual, and no morality is safe until it so becomes a matter of inward choice. While childish morality is largely a matter of outward observance there is a good deal of evidence that this inner demand and sanction is not absent. Some things make the child miserably unhappy, after he has done them, quite apart from the question of external authority; others give him a strange inward satisfaction. One schoolmaster of wide experience is of opinion that many neuroses in boys are the result of repression of this inward moral demand, which his experience has shown him is "independent of the home or the social milieu."[1] He argues that as the moral demands of the spirit are deeper than physical demands their repression leads to a worse complex and more nervous disorder. The Christian parent or teacher will believe, and help the child to believe, that this moral imperative is the voice of the Holy Spirit of God within him. One little boy who was beating a helpless animal, suddenly stopped when he heard a voice within him saying, "Don't do that, it is wrong!" He ran to his mother to ask her what this mysterious voice was.

[1] See Morton, *Childhood's Fears*, pp. 50 and 100.

She answered that it was the voice of God.[1] Sometimes the child himself is conscious of this, as was a little French boy of five years of age, who felt that he ought to protect a drunken man from the insults of a crowd, but was too much afraid to do so. Afterwards, he says, "I began to cry, . . . reproaching myself that I had not had the courage to intervene, and feeling very sure that in disobeying this inner voice I had disobeyed God."[2]

When this inner demand makes itself heard, the problem for the child, as for the adult, is where to find the will and the power to obey it. Here a strong will, if it is a will to good, is invaluable to the child, and parents and teachers should guard it from anything that would weaken it, rather than obey John Wesley's counsel: "Break your child's will in order that it may not perish; break its will as soon as it can speak plainly, or even before it can speak at all."[3] That will is usually strongest which is fired by the strongest desire, and the strongest motive in religion is the worship of an Ideal which is a Person. The children should be taught that He not only makes demands but gives grace and power to fulfil them, not in any magic way, but by all the gracious and strengthening influences which one personality can bring to bear upon another. Children will sometimes inquire impatiently why God does not *make* them good when they pray that He should, and ask what is the good of praying if they have to keep on trying themselves. One has to show them that He

[1] Clavier, *op. cit.*, p. 91. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 90.
[3] Quoted by Wm. James, *Talks to Teachers*, p. 182.

wants them to choose the good for themselves and for love of Him, and that in all such choice and effort His friendship is co-operating with resources which are infinite.

. . . . . .

Would I fain in my impotent yearning do all for this man,
And dare doubt He alone shall not help him who yet alone can ?

IX

TRAINING IN WORSHIP

It has just been argued that it is communion and friendship with God which makes the highest morality possible. If this is so, any religious education which is content with mere instruction, and does not seek to establish this relationship between the soul and God in worship, is incomplete and largely futile. The child, no less than the adult, needs a Power outside himself, always with him, loving him, strengthening and guiding him. But if this Power is to be available for him in personal and not in magical ways, its relationship with him must be personal and real and not alone in outward seeming. The child's worship must be his own and not a feeble imitation of adult worship imposed upon him from without. "God is a Spirit and they that worship Him must worshp Him in spirit and in truth."[1] In this classic utterance on worship are the tests of its value, whether that of children or adults: sincerity, spirituality, worship of God in His true nature as Spirit and as Father.

The test of sincerity would at once rule out much that is provided for children's worship in school and church. There are some people who say that real

[1] John iv. 24.

worship is not a child's experience, that mere outward form is all one can expect, that life will come into the shell later. They are satisfied if all the children are quiet and all eyes closed while the minister or Sunday School superintendent prays a ten-minutes' prayer. It is true to say that much adult worship cannot be part of a child's experience and as such is a weariness to the flesh. One little boy longed to be a butterfly because then nobody would ask him to go to church, while a little girl sighed wearily, "Oh, Mummy, I *do* hate the litany; it makes me so *hungry!*" [1] The effect is worse still if children are found to join in the insincere and parrot-like singing of hymns describing this world as a "weary wilderness" or a "desert drear"; few children could honestly sing that. Hymns of thanksgiving for a spiritual experience which cannot as yet be part of the child's life must be ruled out by this test of sincerity, so must affirmations of belief in advanced theological dogmas. To say, however, that adult worship is not a child's experience is not to say the same thing of all worship as such. The evidence is overwhelming that worship is a natural instinct and experience of childhood. If this is so the question the teacher will ask is, "How can it best be developed and trained?"

First of all, it should be noticed that it cannot be stimulated by mere command. "Let us pray!" or "Let us give thanks" will, of themselves, no more induce prayer and thanksgiving, than would the exhortation "Let us all be angry" be followed

[1] Canton, *Children's Sayings*, p. 113.

by a corporate fit of rage. In all such cases the right stimulus, whether emotional or intellectual, must be provided. The teacher must discover what are the things that naturally touch the children with joy or longing, tinged with awe. Beauty, especially of some natural object, is undoubtedly one of the greatest of these. Majestic beauty, such as that of a mountain range, or of an extensive view does not as yet appeal to them. Perez tells how some children taken to the Pic du Midi found all their pleasure in scrambling up the peak and pretending that they were on donkeys.[1] But the beauty of a spring wood, of meadow flowers, of sunlit stream and deep blue sky stirs them with an æsthetic appreciation which is often a real activity of the spirit. Dr Montessori tells of an incident which took place in the garden of one of her "Children's Houses":

"One day I found them seated on the ground, all in a circle, around a splendid red rose which had bloomed in the night; silent and calm, literally immersed in mute contemplation."[2]

If it is true that search for and appreciation of beauty is one of the three great activities of the spirit, then such an attitude has in it something religious, although not consciously so. The children become aware of the glory of the world and in that pass through a sacred experience. And very often the recognition of its sacred character is there, too. Lady Barratt tells of a little boy she knows who was

[1] *L'Art et la Poésie chez l'Enfant*, p. 103.
[2] See *The Montessori Method.*

taken by his nurse for a walk in the woods. " They came to a wonderful glade where the light was shining through the trees, and the little boy just stood still with an awed look on his face. Then turning to his nurse, he said, ' Nurse, I think this must be the place where God lives.' "[1] The story of how God made the beautiful world is one which does not fail to stir such a response in young children, if it is really well told. The few minutes of Nature-study, more from the æsthetic than from the scientific standpoint, though not excluding the latter, which are being introduced into the modern Sunday School session for the younger children, have ample justification. Care should be taken that this appreciation of beauty, natural in little children, should not be scorned or crowded out as they grow older. Clutton-Brock thinks that one reason for the powerful attraction of sensuality in the teens is that it makes the one appeal of beauty to lives otherwise starved of it. Lives long aware of beauty and of its ultimate value " will not yield to sensuality as a revelation."[2]

If beauty provides such a stimulus to worship it is nothing short of tragedy that so many Sunday School buildings should be so ugly. I have seen children's services held in the dirty cellars under churches, the bare forms strewn with tattered hymn-books and dirty Bibles, a few atrocious coloured prints on the walls and over everything a pall of dust and gloom. For many children, all

[1] Chesser, *Health and Psychology of the Child*, p. 42.
[2] Cf. Clutton-Brock, *The Ultimate Belief*, p. 96.

their ideas of God are centred round such a room. It is not possible always to have beautiful buildings for children's worship, but it is possible to have cleanliness, fresh air, walls distempered with a light and restful colour, some clean casement hangings, and a vase of flowers or green leaves with its silent message of beauty. Beautiful music, too, quiet and reverent, will do much to add to the beauty of the service and the worshipful atmosphere of the room. The children are quickly responsive to the suggestion that all these things convey ; time is not wasted that is spent upon them.

When the desire to worship has been quickened by consideration of the goodness of God, in whatever form, it will need to find expression. What forms of this are most suitable for children? As with adults it may be expressed in praise, prayer, and life itself, but these must be in forms suitable to the children's need and stage of mental and spiritual development ; otherwise they will not be self-expressive and they will not be sincere. The hymns that children sing must be simple, although contrary to general usage, the simplicity must be simplicity of thought more than simplicity of language, for the latter is often explained by its context, or can be made intelligible by careful teaching. Fine and beautiful language does lead to beautiful thought and there is plenty of evidence that children prefer it. In worship of the God of Truth and Beauty their taste should be fostered, not ignored. David Grayson tells in one of his essays of the wonderful joy he found as a boy in

listening to the reading in church of the majestic prose of the last chapter of Ecclesiastes: "Or ever the sun, and the light, and the moon, and the stars, be darkened, and the clouds return after the rain. . . . or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel be broken at the cistern; and the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit return unto God who gave it." Children should be encouraged to sing some of the grand hymns of the English language, rather than the doggerel that is so often provided for their use because it happens to be set to a tune that goes with a swing. It does not matter at all if the children do not understand every single word, provided they can understand and mean the great, simple idea behind the words, which are themselves dignified and worthy. Such hymns are not often found in the section "Hymns for the Young," but can be found in the opening "Praise" section of most hymn-books. In one class I had of forty children, from six to eight years of age, the favourite hymn was Milton's, "Let us with a gladsome mind." This question of beauty in language applies also to children's prayers and all the Order of Worship. The headmaster of Parkgate Preparatory School tells of the disgust aroused among his boys by a missioner who exhorted them to "Slog the Devil to square-leg for six when he bowled them an underhand." This "shocked their natural modesty most profoundly."[1]

[1] Grenfell, *Unconventional Prayers for Boys*, Introduction.

Besides the question of choice of language in worship there is also that of the mental picture lying behind it. Only those hymns which present a picture true to the nature of God and worthy of Him should be permitted in a children's service ; worship should be the emotional response produced by such a picture and idea. This means that children should be encouraged to look at the picture before they sing the hymn or pray the prayer.

In considering the subject of children's prayers one must bear in mind the distinction between " saying prayers " and praying. The children may say the prayers after their teacher and yet never speak to their Father at all. Little children, who are not yet old enough to be self-conscious, will often make up their own prayers and say them aloud, not only at home, but also in school and Sunday School. A special time for thanksgiving can be kept in such a service, when each child who wishes to do so can thank God aloud for what makes him most glad, the others repeating it afterwards, softly and reverently. The first prayers seem usually to be prayers of thanksgiving : " We thank Thee for the beautiful sunshine." " We thank Thee for the singing of the birds, and for the daisies in the garden " are typical. Sometimes they are more astonishing to the adult mind, as when one of my class of little children prayed, " We thank Thee for the tadpoles," and another, " We thank Thee for our warm baths and for the sponges but especially for the loofahs ! " Such prayers, however, are more likely to be real to the

smaller ones than thanksgivings suggested by their teachers.

From about eight years of age onwards self-consciousness is too great to admit of this outspoken prayer. Older children will, however, often suggest things for which they would like the teacher to give thanks on their behalf, or to remember those in some special need. After each thanksgiving or petition all the children can join in some such simple spoken or sung response as "We thank Thee, O Lord!" A printed litany can sometimes be used, if teacher and children have thought over its meaning together first; the same thing applies to many other beautiful collects or short prayers, or to the teacher's short extemporaneous prayer. It is sometimes a good thing to let the children write short prayers of their own, which can be brought to school and read. Some of these show a distinct preference for stately and beautiful language, others are simple and childlike. Here is one written by a child of eight and a half years:

"We thank Thee for our health and strength and the nice flowers and the beautiful days and the beautiful sunshine and all the pleasures and we thank Thee for our friends and the beautiful singing of birds and all the things we have to eat."

Just occasionally an opportunity should be given for short prayer together in silence. It has to be carefully prepared for and the atmosphere must be just right, but at these times God may become very real to the children in the silence, and an impression be made that is never forgotten.

It is almost a psychological truism that the soul and mind act upon the body, it is often forgotten that the body also acts upon mind and soul. Yet this is important to remember in the conduct of children's worship, for a reverent bodily attitude helps to generate religious feeling. Kneeling, and occasionally standing, for prayer, with eyes closed and everything still, goes far to help a true spirit of reverence. This should be contagious rather than compulsory. A teacher whose own eyes are open to spy upon a possible culprit is doing more to destroy reverence than to enforce it. If, on the other hand, the child opens his eyes to see a look of peace or adoration on the teacher's face something of it descends upon his own spirit. Children have a natural sense of reverence and of what is fitting, if this is not destroyed from outside. "Of course it isn't proper to laugh when you are saying your prayers," said William Canton's small daughter. "You would behave if you went to see the Queen; and God is greater."[1]

It is difficult to say when a child is first able to pray; this probably varies in individual cases; until the time comes it is better to pray for the child than to force him to pray. Ultimately it is a matter between himself and God, and after a time of help and training, the parent or teacher must leave it there. It becomes, as Emerson says, "profane to seek to interpose helps." "If you do not mind, I should like best to be quite alone with God," said Dean Inge's little girl in the last weeks of her life,

[1] Canton, *Children's Sayings*, p. 34.

asking to discontinue her childish practice of saying her prayers aloud in presence of her mother or nurse.[1]

There is one other side of worship that the parent or teacher can help the child to see ; that true worship is not only a thing of special times and seasons, but an abiding attitude of the spirit. They should be taught that it is possible to work and play, to eat and bathe, and laugh, and read to the glory of God ; to talk to Him and listen to Him all day long, as a man talks to his friend. They can be taught that when they are trying to understand the real truth of a thing they are worshipping God, when they are enjoying beauty or friendship they are worshipping God, so, too, when they are conquering a temptation or helping someone who is down. Only so will their worship at special times and in special places be pure and true and consistent.

[1] Inge, *Personal Religion and the Life of Devotion*, p. 92.

X

LOVE AND HERO-WORSHIP

THERE can be few more important questions for religious education than that of our understanding of the nature, and possibilities of training, of that emotion and activity of the spirit which Our Lord put at the centre of the Christian religion, that love to God and man which sums up in itself all the Law and the Prophets.

There are two distinct kinds of love: a higher and a lower. The lower is response to benefits received, such as the love of a baby for its mother, of a patient for his doctor, or of man for God. It has been well defined by Oskar Pfister as "a feeling of attraction and a sense of self-surrender, arising out of a need, and directed towards an object that offers hope of gratification." Some psychologists argue that this kind of love is invariably bound up with the sex instincts, but, while this is often so, it is not invariably the case. One may have a man or woman friend of one's own sex without exhibiting a tendency towards homosexuality, and it cannot by any means be proved beyond all doubt that a child's affection is always sexual in origin. At first, certainly, it is not disinterested, but is his response to the love and care of someone else for

him. It is Nature's way of prolonging a beneficial relationship, of making the child more amenable to the wishes and wisdom of an older person. It is far more effective in this respect than fear can ever be, is the greatest safeguard against temptation to wrongdoing, and prompts the child towards a positive desire to do what his parents would wish.

Children are supposed to be very demonstrative in their expression of affection, but observation shows them to be more often gaily thoughtless and indifferent, impatient of too many caresses or kisses. In this Nature is a wise teacher, and Freud's advice is sound here, when he says that too many parental caresses cause premature sexual maturity, spoiling the child and making it unfit to renounce love later, or to be satisfied with a small share of it.[1] Jung speaks of the harm done by the "terrible mother," who desires exclusive devotion from her child and will not let him grow up into a self-determining being. Many a later complex and neurosis has its root here. In the book *Anatole France en Pantoufles* one reads of the tyrannous love of a mother which kept her son in leading-strings until his thirtieth year, making him vacillating and timid and unable to cross the gulf between adolescence and manhood.

While excessive caresses should be avoided, so, too, should be the rigid exclusion of them, for this may cause the child to doubt his parents' love and to develop a strong inferiority-complex. Alfred Adler concludes that where this complex is present

[1] Cf. Freud, *Three Contributions to the Theory of Sex*, p. 83.

there has very frequently been something wrong with the child's love-life. This will be confirmed by the experience of many teachers. Children are not yet old enough to appreciate the love which will work and go without luxuries that they may be fed and clothed; they need some outward sign that the love is there. Some such precious moments there should be in every child's life; perhaps bed-time provides the best opportunity for them. Canton has drawn a charming picture of one such actual time between himself and his little son:

" After kissing of hands, backs and palms, kissing of cheek, forehead and hair, it is—

" 'I like you, papa!'

" 'And I like you!'

" 'Do you like me?'

" 'Yes, dear.'

" 'And I like you; you are so nice, you are so sweet, you are so very lovely!'

" 'So are you!'

" 'So are you! I like you and I love you!'

" 'And I love you. Go to sleep now, like a good boy.' "

In a deep voice, and with a sigh of satisfaction, " Yes, I will."[1]

In a way, it is hard for the parents to try to develop this beautiful childish tenderness into the higher and stronger kind of love which seeks, not only to receive, but also to give and to serve. Yet, if the children are not to grow up selfish, self-centred and ultimately loveless, such development

[1] Canton, *Children's Sayings*, p. 43.

must take place. The first step in this comes when expression of affection is shown, not only in word or caress, but also in deed. Any proffered service the child may offer should not be refused ; if it is dangerous or impracticable to let him do that particular thing another little service can be suggested in its place and made equally attractive. Should these requests be made when the child is in a sulky mood, he may refuse to grant them and declare that he does not love his father and mother; one should not ask for an expression of love if that is not felt at the time; rather these suggestions of some small service should be made when the child is in a loving mood. It is only by repeated training in many small acts of self-sacrifice in all the relationships of the home that the child will begin to attain the higher kind of love. On days of special honour and enjoyment, as on his birthday or at Christmas-time, the mother might plan with him some small, happy surprise for the other members of the family. When his sympathy is aroused by the sight of any special distress, she will help him to find some way of trying to relieve it, remembering that emotion which does not express itself in action is not only useless but actively harmful. When any difficult thing has to be faced, an appeal that it should be done for love's sake will often be met with brave and proud response and will mean real growth in character. One kindergarten teacher tells how a little girl came to her one morning saying, "My hands loved you yesterday." "Did they? Tell me about it," she replied.

"Our baby tore my mat, and I was just going to slap her, but I thought of you, and I didn't."[1]

Such a relation of love and trust, training and effort, between parents (or teachers) and their children may prove a real preparation for a similar relationship between the children and their Father in Heaven. Then they will not fear Him, but trust Him, and try to do His will. At first, they love God for the same utilitarian reasons for which they first loved their earthly parents. "We love Him because He first loved us." They love Him because He made the flowers and the birds, because He gave them their fathers and mothers, because He watches over their safety in the dark. To point out His benefits is one of the best ways to arouse their love for Him. Happily, belief in the goodness and kindness of God is firm in the hearts of most children, as it was in the heart of the small boy, who, when told by his aunt of the big book in which God wrote down the sins of children, was sure that God had a rubber on the end of His pencil![2]

With the passing of infancy and early childhood at about eight years of age, love begins to take a new form, that of admiration and hero-worship, rather than that of dependence. If one may once again compare the child's development with that of the race one may say that he has reached the stage of those tribes whose history is the story of its great chiefs and leaders. His admiration, his

[1] Harrison, *Study in Child Nature*, p. 86.
[2] See Clavier, *op. cit.*, p. 85.

delight in biography, his hero-worship is as keen as theirs. At first it is not so much the hero-worship of a man's character and personality, which develops later, but rather that of the man's deeds, of the man in action. Before adolescence abstract thinking and idealism are beyond the child's powers; it will only exercise its influence over him if it is embodied in good lives which are in contact with his own, or in history or imaginative story. This is why, from the dawn of history, men have been taught by the classic stories of noble character. The day has gone past when it was argued that great men were but resultants of the spirit of their age ; now they are seen to be outstanding examples of the power of personality in human affairs and history.

There are not many children who do not at some time worship in this way some man or woman whom they actually know in daily life. Sometimes this is one of their parents, more probably their teacher or some older friend outside the family circle. This friend will have an almost unbounded influence on the child's life. Baudouin has argued that the condition of successful moral influence is the " transference " of feeling and sympathy from the pupil on to the person of the educator.[1] This is certainly the case in mental healing ; it is probably so in effective teaching also. Some years ago there was a strong reaction against " Impressionism " in education, such as that exercised by Arnold of Rugby ; to-day psycho-analysis is doing

[1] See Baudouin, *Studies in Psycho-Analysis*, p. 115.

much to re-establish the value of this sympathetic attraction between scholar and teacher. This is probably especially true in religious education where the teacher is trying to show the value and attractiveness of a certain way of living.

No good teacher will, however, be satisfied to remain the one embodiment of his pupil's ideals; he has all the moving story of centuries of human heroism and goodness to draw upon. The Bible is particularly rich in such stories, it constantly presents its truth through the medium of heroic personalities. An imagination which has been fired by them comes instinctively to love the fine and beautiful and to despise the base. Religious teachers have not made anything like so much as they might have done of this aspect of Bible teaching, especially in dealing with the New Testament, yet it abounds with heroic adventures and deeds as does Christian history in later centuries. Children of this age should be shown Livingstone facing alone and undismayed the unknown terrors of the dark African forest—Chalmers giving his life for the natives of New Guinea—Peter and John, rough and poor but dauntless, replying to the threats of the mighty council with the magnificent answer, "We must fear God rather than men." Above all it is essential that they should see Jesus Christ in this light. Little children like to think of "Gentle Jesus, meek and mild," who went about healing the sick and doing good. To a boy of ten or eleven this seems weak and effeminate and few of them admire Him as a hero. Religious teaching has been

gravely at fault here. It should have shown Him riding in broad daylight and unprotected into the very stronghold of His enemies, or standing in calm dignity between His fear-stricken followers and the soldiers in the Garden, saying, "I am He whom ye seek. Let these men go." One recalls the words written by a boy of eleven, who had heard the story of how He died told from this standpoint —"I can still see His flashing eyes, His sturdy countenance, His strapping figure"—and remembers that the description was not his teacher's but his own.

In Jesus Christ there is something which satisfies children of every race and age and temperament, if they can but see Him as He is. The supreme task of religious education is just to help them to see.

Says Carlyle: "No nobler feeling than this admiration for one higher than himself dwells in the breast of man. It is to this hour, and at all hours, the vivifying influence in man's life. Religion I find stands upon it; not Paganism only, but far higher and truer religions — all religion hitherto known. Hero-worship, heart-felt, prostrate admiration, submission, burning, boundless, for a noblest godlike Form of Man—is not that the germ of Christianity itself?"[1]

[1] Carlyle, *Heroes and Hero-Worship*.

XI

RELIGION AND CHILDREN'S LIFE-EXPERIENCES

As has been already argued there are two main aspects of education, that which the individual gradually acquires from his own experience of life, and that which is passed on to him of the experience of his teachers and of their predecessors. The former immediate experiences are both more vivid at the time and more lasting in their effects than are those vicariously acquired—a truth expressed in such popular educational saws as "Experience is the best teacher" and "We learn by doing." When anyone is confronted with a new situation he is forced to adjust himself to it in fresh ways, he learns a new lesson, is not the same person in that sense that he was before he passed through the experience. The aim of education is to help him to make the right adjustment, that of religious education to help him to make a religious adjustment, to turn his new experience into a Christian experience, to interpret it in a Christian way and to use it towards Christian ends. Such direct experiences may come to a child in two ways: they may arise naturally in his home, school, play, or church life, or he may be deliberately led into

them by parent or teacher for a definite educational purpose. In either case the teacher will try to interpret and control the experience so that its full meaning and value is received and acted upon. Some experiences have more definite religious associations than others, but the concern of religious education cannot be satisfied with these alone; it will only achieve its end in a manhood or womanhood which sees "every common bush afire with God."

In America, during the last few years, a method of teaching by experience, of leading the children into situations and actions which will prepare them for the coming experiences of life, has been extensively used, both in secular and in definitely religious education. It is known by the rather unattractive name of "The Project Method," but English teachers will do well to consider it, in spite of its ugly name. A "project" has been defined by Mr Erwin Shaver, one of its foremost exponents, as "a single unified experience, utilized because of its social values, which can be entered into with a whole-hearted purpose, which is representative of real life situations, and which makes for control of new experiences as they are met."[1] Briefly, the procedure is something like this. The children's interest is aroused by some need, individual or social, which it is within their power to meet, if suitably guided by their teachers. For example, one of their schoolfellows may meet with

[1] Shaver, *The Project-Principle in Religious Education*, to which the writer is much indebted in this section.

an accident which means that he will be confined to bed for several weeks in a small house, without comforts, delicacies or many toys. Such a situation will naturally arouse the children's interest and sympathy, and present an excellent opportunity for a class-project, which will help the children to meet such situations in the future in a Christian spirit and with real Christian ability and effectiveness. After the teacher has spoken to the children she will ask them how they think they can do anything for the little boy that he would really enjoy. They would probably suggest bringing toys for him, writing him a letter, making scrap-books for him, taking him flowers or fruit. In carrying out such a project the children will be enthusiastically occupied for weeks : making toys and scrap-books, drawing pictures, learning how to write letters, how to arrange fruit in baskets or flowers in bunches. It should be noticed that the " Project Method " is not really a new teaching-method, but rather a point of view or general plan within which most of the ordinary technical methods of teaching can be employed. Story-telling, questions and discussion, use of illustrative material, memory-work, hand-work, the development of the critical judgment, will all find a place in most good projects. For these to be well carried out interest must be aroused, a definite purpose formed, careful preparations made, steady work done, and, at the end, a definite review made as to whether the purpose has been adequately attained and where it could be improved upon if repeated. Only so is the project psycho-

logically complete. In religious education this method of teaching has been found to be really valuable. Action is an essential part of true Christianity, and too often Christian teachers have been satisfied with merely telling their children *about* honesty, purity and love. These will not automatically transmute themselves into conduct, but anyone who has been trained from childhood to put them into practice is the more likely to do so when master of his own life. This was the way of the Great Teacher in His training of the Twelve. At first they assisted Him in small ways, as He carried out His beneficent work; later He sent them out to work themselves; ultimately He left the work itself in their hands. When He taught by speech, He spoke from real life-situations, which were within their comprehension or experience.

Ultimately, the best projects are those worked out together by teacher and children as the need naturally arises. But since this requires a good deal of initiative and resource it is useful to have an account of what other churches and schools have done in this direction. A full description of seventy-seven such projects will be found in Mr Shaver's *Church School Projects*.[1] They include such ideas as "A Friendship Party," "Kindness to Animals," "Our Parish Church," "A Book of Missionary Heroes," "Choosing a Profession," "A Book of Prayers," and "Thanking a Traffic Policeman" who guided the children across the road each day.

One objection to the Project Method is often

[1] University of Chicago Press.

made, and the writer considers it a valid one ; that this method does away with all lesson-courses and all orderly presentation of a subject, as of the Gospel Story. This may be met either by using the Project Method only for some weeks of the year, alongside others, or by planning and carrying out the projects on some week-day afternoon or evening, making that an expression of the course of lessons which is being given at the time. In any case the more the religious teaching and worship of the children can be linked up with the everyday experiences of their lives the more present reality and lasting effect they are likely to have. In schools where this is done religion is not a tiresome form but something real and alive. How this may be secured is shown by some of the titles of the prayers written by the Headmaster of Parkgate Preparatory School for the use of his boys, *e.g.*, " Beginning of Term," " Blessing Our People," " Being Keen," " Playing Games," " Writing Letters," " Friends," " Decent Modesty," " For Those Leaving." He tells in the Preface to the book that such prayers are not to oust the magnificent prayers of the Prayer-Book, but to be used with them and to help to give them meaning.[1]

Throughout this essay consideration has been given to the bearing of the ordinary life-situations of children upon their religious life, but a few of the more eventful and sacred of these experiences deserve some special mention.

Except to only children, or to the youngest of a

[1] See Grenfell, *Unconventional Prayers for Boys.*

family, there comes once, or from time to time, the mysterious and momentous event of the birth of a little brother or sister. The other children are confronted with it in the families of their friends. The curiosity of the children is aroused and they come and ask where the baby came from. Too often they are met either with silence and a rebuke, with the suggestion that the subject is not a fit one to discuss; or they are side-tracked by some such explanation as that the doctor brought the baby in his bag, that it was found under a gooseberry bush, or that angels dropped it silently into its mother's arms in the dead of night. The danger of so withholding the truth is that the child will get the information in other and often unclean ways, from servants or from other children. The whole subject becomes warped and shameful to him. Even if the information is not forthcoming for some years, unhealthy imagination is stimulated by the unsatisfied curiosity, and premature sexual excitation takes place. The only way to avoid such undesirable consequences is to tell the truth naturally, in a matter-of-fact way, and yet with reverence. All of it cannot be told at once, and the question of just how much of it should be told, when, and in what way, is one on which it is impossible to lay down general rules. The situation must be dealt with as it naturally arises, and, as a rule, it is wise to give just as much information as is asked for and not to go into full details all at once. Teaching on the subject should be graduated. One experienced schoolmaster considers that he would tell a boy the

meaning of maternity by nine years old, not later; before going away to school he would warn him of the danger of self-defilement, basing the warning on knowledge, and by thirteen would give him a fairly complete outline of the physiology of procreation.[1] Dr David (lately Headmaster of Clifton), while not giving such definite advice, considers that the boy should have enough information to make it unnecessary for him to discuss the matter with his friends, given with the reverence which will deepen his natural modesty.[2] Most teachers agree that the teaching should be, on the whole, positive on the right care of the body and on the meaning and beauty of life, rather than on lurid warnings against possible evils which may only serve to suggest them. A good deal of teaching can be indirectly given through Nature-study of flowers and animals, and still more by the care of pets. Children who have been taught frankly and reverently, in a progressive way as their curiosity widens, arrive at adolescence and maturity feeling that they have always known these facts of life. It is important that the physical side alone should not be dwelt upon, with it should go some teaching of the spiritual basis of it all, that love of husband and wife, of parent and child, which is a creative thing, and which has in it something of the Divine and creative Love of God.

When the new baby comes into the home, the father, and especially the mother, must beware of arousing the jealousy and angry misery of the child

[1] See *Moral Instruction and Training in Schools*, p. 157.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 157

who came before it. This is sometimes so fierce that the child will cause actual physical harm to the new baby. This does not frequently happen ; more often the feeling is suppressed and is the beginning of an inferiority-complex whose baneful effects last for many years. The wise mother will prevent this by foreseeing the possibility of it, and by taking every possible precaution to prevent the child feeling in this way.

As the beginning of life is a great puzzle to the child, so also is the end of it. Fear of death is a much more widespread experience than most observers would be inclined to believe, for it has come to the children with a sudden shock for which they were wholly unprepared. A death in the family, the sight of an open grave, finding a dead bird, overhearing adult conversations, may all bring this sudden shock. The horror of the thing grows upon the child if the fear is repressed. Sometimes it is outspoken. One little girl asked her mother to put a great stone over her head to prevent her from growing tall, as people who grew up grew old also and then died.[1] A teacher of Standard V girls asked, after reading the Twenty-third Psalm, if any of the girls liked it, and if so, why? One replied, " I liked it because David wasn't afraid of death and I am."[2] For this, doubtless, the pagan trappings of woe which are still found in modern society are responsible. George Sand describes vividly the terror she felt when first dressed in

[1] Cf. Sully, *Studies in Childhood*, p. 121.

[2] Wodehouse, *The Scripture Lesson in the Elementary School*, p. 13.

mourning clothes for her father. "The black made a strong impression on me. I cried in submitting to it; for though I had worn the black dress and veil of the Spaniards, I had certainly never put on black stockings, and the stockings frightened me terribly. I would have it that they were putting on me the legs of death, and my mother had to show me that she wore them also."[1]

While this fear of death is widespread it is not as annihilation but as a temporary unpleasant experience. They want to know when "the dead" will come off the person or the bird. There is often great confusion as to where the dead person has gone. He is in heaven, and yet he is in a box in the ground. How can these things be reconciled? Some think of the grave as the underground entrance to Heaven. Kinship with primitive human thought was shown by the boy who decided that God had taken the breath to Heaven.[2] Some children clearly distinguish their hidden selves from their bodies, like the little girl of whom Sully writes, who lay back in bed with her eyes shut and said, "You can see *my body*, Mother, but you can't see *me*."[3] Professor Street, who has made a most interesting "Genetic Study of Immortality,"[4] gives overwhelming evidence that children never think of themselves as ceasing to exist, and that they have to learn their mortality rather than their immortality. This instinct, so universally shared by primitive

[1] See Sully, *op. cit.*, p. 497.
[2] Sully, *op. cit.*, p. 123.
[3] *Op. cit.*, p. 114.
[4] *Pedagogical Seminary*, Vol. VI, pp. 267-313.

man, seems to be innate. All the evidence I have been able to find supports the idea that it is a fundamental instinct of childhood. The idea of the soul is extremely vague and widely differing. Most children seem to think of it as a shadowy body; others conceive of it as "like a bird," "a small white stone," "a white cloud," "a large bubble," "a beautiful fairy"; all these concealed somewhere in the body.[1]

Children generally conceive of heaven, either as a beautiful city, white and sparkling with gold or precious stones; or as a lovely country full of animals and flowers, like the Indians' "happy hunting-grounds." Luther's description of heaven in his letter to his little son Hans is a masterpiece of child psychology as well as of literary charm. "I know a beautiful garden, where there are many children with golden robes. They pick up the rosy-cheeked apples, pears, plums, etc., from under the trees, sing, jump and rejoice all day long. They have also pretty ponies with golden reins and silver saddles. I asked whose garden it was and to whom the children belonged. The man said, 'These are the children who love to pray and learn their lessons.'" To get to this beautiful heaven, thinks the child-mind, one has but to "step into another room." One little girl whose nurse had been to a funeral believed she had come back from heaven and asked to be told all about it.[2] After the death of William Canton's little girl, his boy, who was younger, said, "We must

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 276. [2] Canton, *Sayings of Childhood*, p. 103.

die into Heaven to her ; and God will keep us there. . . . When I die into Heaven I *shall* see her . . . I shall have plenty of toys to play with there and flowers to pluck. The flowers never die there ; they are always in warm summer air." [1]

It seems the little people's ideas of death and the hereafter are both beautiful and fearless, if some wise teaching prepares them for the shock of death and sets free their native trustfulness, hope and imagination. Two things must be done here ; one is to show them that death is not a wholly unreasonable and cruel punishment, the other that the body which goes into the grave is not the real self. After a hard day's romping, although the moment of saying "Good night" is often an unhappy one, the children know the restful satisfaction of curling up in bed and dropping off into quiet sleep. They can be told that so it is with people who are old or whose bodies are weary ; they go to sleep and their spirits wake fresh and unfettered, still in the keeping of God. On the principle that one should not teach children what they must afterwards unlearn, they should be led to understand that descriptions of Heaven are just the most beautiful pictures that men's minds are able to make of it, but that they cannot be more beautiful than it really is, because it is the Home of God.

One other experience which sometimes takes place before twelve years of age must be mentioned. Starbuck has shown that conversion is mainly an

[1] Canton, *In Memory of W. V.*, p. 146.

adolescent phenomenon, but conversions in very early childhood are not unknown, although rare, and are more frequent between the ages of ten and twelve years. Wesley, in his *Journal*,[1] tells of the conversion of Phœbe Bartlet, aged four years. While this seems now incredible there is evidence that these crises were as real and as lasting in their effects as were the conversions of adults, and presented the same features.[2] While it is doubtless true that these conversions can be largely accounted for by the atmosphere and suggestion with which the child was surrounded, these alone do not explain everything, any more than they do in the case of adult conversion.

Conversions of little children are naturally much less frequent than they were in Wesley's time. Parents and teachers now would hardly feel justified in working for them and would rather prepare the way for the Spirit which bloweth when and where it listeth.

Conversions are naturally more numerous in later childhood than in the very early period. While statistics can never be entirely reliable in such an inquiry as this, those of Starbuck, Hammond, Stanley Hall, Ayres and Gulick show a sharp rise in the number at or about the eleventh year.[3] Some teachers believe that there is a preliminary religious crisis at this time, which is repeated and ratified in

[1] Vol. III, p. 244.

[2] Cf. Hammond, *Early Conversion*, and Dr Horton's essay in *The Child and Religion*.

[3] See table in Clavier's book, p. 43.

the more strong and emotional one in adolescence. The religious impressions which have accumulated year by year, buried for the most part in the subconscious, may suddenly flood consciousness with illumination and joy, and issue in a decisive choice. Perhaps more often the conversion crisis is the moment when the child decides to be loyal to the faith which he has been taught; it becomes something intimate and personal instead of something external. In either case the important thing is that the decision should be followed up by wise teaching and encouragement. A child at this age is almost broken-hearted by the first failure after the great decision. He will owe much to the one who will show him that the condition of the Christian life is not always the victory, but the lifelong struggle, and who will save him from morbid introspection or mental indolence by showing him some real way of serving Jesus Christ there and then, not only in the dim and distant future.

XII

GENERAL CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY

Periods of Child-Life

Throughout this essay one fact has emerged again and again, that there are several broadly marked periods of development in child-life, and that normal children within these periods show something of the same characteristics, needs and interests. These periods are not arbitrary but natural divisions, and although they overlap and their boundaries cannot be definitely fixed, it is possible to detect the outstanding characteristics of each, and so to form some idea of a progressive system of religious education which will do something to meet the needs of each period as it occurs. Corresponding with certain physical changes (as those of the second dentition or of the pubertal crisis) there are other changes, mental and spiritual ; just as real, just as critical, as the former. A brief summary of the characteristics, needs and interests of these periods, and of the methods of religious education which they themselves suggest, may gather up the arguments of this essay into a definite general conclusion.

Young life before maturity falls naturally into two divisions: (1) childhood—before pubescence;

and (2) adolescence—after pubescence. Childhood itself falls almost as naturally, although perhaps not quite so obviously, into four divisions: (1) infancy—from birth until three or four years of age, when the child can walk, and talk well enough to ask innumerable questions in order to satisfy his rapidly growing instinct of curiosity ; (2) early childhood—from three or four years of age until about six years of age, the period of second dentition ; (3) middle childhood — from about six until about eight or nine ; (4) later childhood—from eight or nine until eleven or twelve.

(1) *Infancy.*—During this period, as was argued in Chapters II and III, religious education has to limit its flow of influence to three main channels: suggestion, imitation and simple stories and rhymes, but these channels cut so deep that all the after-life is influenced by them. No training here can take the place of the suggestion of the parents' own Christian life and genuine religious feeling and acts, this, in its turn, played out by the children in imitative acts which widen their experience and impress their memories, and followed later, when the children are able to understand language, by simple moral and religious stories, rhymes and talks.

(2) *Early Childhood.*—Although a faint degree of control within a very limited sphere is reached by about four years of age, there is still much lack of control and restlessness. The great task of the parent, nurse or teacher is to find an outlet for

this, and to guide it, rather than to repress it. The results of repression are seen in irritability and nervousness, friction and unhappiness, a weakened will and character. In this light the old practice of making the children sit through long hymns, prayers and lessons stands condemned. There must be opportunity for constant change of posture and freedom of movement. Hymns, prayers, and picture talks must be all of the shortest. At this time the senses are hungry; all of them can be used as avenues of religious appeal. Imitation must be given full scope, and when the religious teaching lends itself to reverent dramatization, this should be planned for and wisely guided. In this way the dawning imagination will find exercise, as well as in listening to simple stories taken from the Bible or from extra-biblical sources. The strong home-interest of children will be remembered in the choice of these stories and talks, and in "news-time," during the Sunday School session, when they may tell freely of exciting happenings at home during the week. Opportunity is also given for free questioning so that the instinct of curiosity, so strong at this age, may fulfil its function. All this means that these small children must be given a room for themselves, apart from the rest of the school, both for teaching and worship.

(3) *Middle Childhood.*—While there is still much physical activity and restlessness during this period, the activity is more purposeful and more controlled. The children can be trusted to be more orderly and

to work more together. Although still largely self-centred, they no longer feel that the world revolves entirely round their own small persons. There is consciousness of rules and laws which are binding and which must be obeyed. The imagination is very active during this period, and this is the time for carrying the children away into the surroundings and events of the Bible stories in a way which leaves an indelible impression on their minds. This vicarious experience may become the basis of true Christian sympathy and devotion. This devotion will be largely given to the Lord who went about doing good, who was full of grace and mercy. Acts of kindness which show His spirit and would please Him may be planned and carried out by the children. The emphasis of the training will be more largely upon training the imagination and the feelings, rather than the intellect. The time for that is not yet. The nearest approach to intellectual training is that given in answers to the child's questions, which are still almost incessant. As questions on origins and on Nature do lead towards God, these studies should find some place in any scheme of religious education for children of this age.

(4) *Later Childhood.*—The earlier part of this period is a time of slow physical growth. Energy goes rather towards making finer motor adjustments and co-ordinations. While growth is more rapid in the second half of the period there is still a good deal of unexpended surplus energy. Athletic

activity is great, and heartily admired in others, and the children have not much admiration for anyone who is not strong physically. With increase of muscular control goes an increase in skill and in constructive activities. Manual training, demanding patience, neatness and accuracy, is at this time a real means of character-training. This can be utilized a good deal in the "Project Method" of religious education.

Between the ages of nine and ten there is often a marked increase in the logical faculty; reasons are asked and given for causes of conduct. Imagination is no longer boundless, experience of life has stepped in and limited it. The child no longer believes in Father Christmas because he has seen his father or mother come in and fill his stocking. The distinction between the real and the ideal worlds is becoming clearer. In stories there is an insistent demand for fact, for tales of adventure and stories from real life. There is a new interest in biography. The child's own personality is coming to mean something to him, so his interest in other personalities grows. Truth presented through the lives of adventurous persons is the best way to bring it home to him. Closely connected with this fresh interest in personalities is the growing instinct of hero-worship. Here is religion's supreme opportunity at this time, especially if summed up in the completely satisfying Personality of Jesus Christ, seen in His completeness, and not deprived of His strong, adventurous and heroic side.

Such, in briefest outline, is a course of religious

education which allows children still to come to Jesus Christ in their own way, as He would have them come ; which strives to put no stumbling-blocks in their way, but only to give that guidance which experience is privileged to give to inexperience ; and which prepares the way for that dedication of body, mind and spirit in adolescence and maturity, to the service of God and man, which is the end and glory of all true education.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

JOHN ADAMS : *Primer on Teaching.* T. & T. Clark.

Clear and simple discussion of educational principles and methods.

BALDWIN : *Mental Development in the Child and the Race.* Macmillan.

R. BADEN-POWELL : *Scouting for Boys.* C. Arthur Pearson Ltd.

EARL-BARNES : *Studies in Education.* Philadelphia.

Valuable data.

WM. CANTON : *Children's Sayings.* George G. Harrap & Co.

—— *The Invisible Playmate and W.V. her Book.* Everyman Series.

A. CASE : *Liberal Christianity and Religious Education.* Macmillan.

HENRI CLAVIER : *L'Idée de Dieu chez l'Enfant.* Fischbacher, Paris.

An excellent and valuable up-to-date study of the religion of children.

A. CLUTTON-BROCK : *The Ultimate Belief.* Constable & Co. Ltd.

A beautiful and illuminating study of the three great activities of the spirit—beauty, truth and goodness—in relation to education.

G. A. COE : *Education in Religion and Morals.* Fleming H. Revell.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

G. A. Coe: *The Child and Religion* (Crown Theological Library). Williams & Norgate.

Essays by various writers.

J. Davidson: *Means and Methods in the Religious Education of the Young.* Longmans, Green & Co.

Dawson: *The Child and his Religion.* University of Chicago Press.

E. Harrison: *A Study of Child Nature.* Chicago Kindergarten College.

W. R. Inge: *Personal Religion and the Life of Devotion.* Longmans.

L. P. Jacks: *A Living Universe.* Hodder & Stoughton.

Wm. James: *Talks to Teachers.* Longmans, Green & Co.

E. P. St John: *Child Nature and Child Nurture.* The Pilgrim Press.

Irving King: *The Psychology of Child Development.* University of Chicago Press.

Kirkpatrick: *Fundamentals of Child-Study.* Macmillan.

A. A. Lamoreaux: *The Unfolding Life.* H. R. Allenson.

J. G. McKenzie: *The Teacher's Allies.* National Sunday School Union.

N. MacMunn: *The Child's Path to Freedom.* G. Bell & Sons.

Invaluable as a study of the principle of freedom in education and for accounts of experiments in freedom.

H. Crichton Miller: *The New Psychology and the Teacher.* Jarrolds.

M. Montessori: *The Montessori Method.* Heinemann.

G. F. Morton : *Childhood's Fears.* Duckworth.

A practical and useful book by a schoolmaster, with a clear survey of the bearing of the various new psychological systems upon education.

E. R. Mumford : *The Dawn of Character.* Longmans, Green & Co.

—— *The Dawn of Religion in the Mind of the Child.* Longmans, Green & Co.

Ogden : *Psychology and Education.* Routledge.

Particularly useful chapters on " Memory."

H. Lee Holland : *Self-Teaching in the Sunday-School.* National Sunday School Union.

Penstone, Lee & Holland : *The Teacher's Craft in Church and School.* National Society.

M. E. Sadler (Editor) : *Moral Instruction and Training in Schools* (Vol. I). Longmans, Green & Co.

W. B. Selbie : *The Psychology of Religion.* Clarendon Press.

E. L. Shaver : *The Project Principle in Religious Education.* University of Chicago Press.

Sloan Chesser : *The Health and Psychology of the Child.* Heinemann.

Deals mainly with younger children and with the relation of psychology to the physical sides of life.

Sturt and Oakden : *Modern Psychology and Education.* Kegan Paul.

An excellent book on educational psychology.

Jas. Sully : *Studies of Childhood.* Longmans, Green & Co.

A. F. Tanner : *The Child.* Rand, Mahaffy & Co.

—— *Experimental Psychology and Child-Study.* Sir Isaac Pitman.

Jas. Ward: *Psychology Applied to Education.* Cambridge University Press.

A more advanced and excellent work on the more philosophical side of the subject.

H. Wodehouse: *The Scripture Lesson in the Elementary School.* S.C.M.

INDEX

ADLER, Alfred, 33, 61, 128.
Altruism, 110 f, 130.
Anger, 106 f.
Animism, 26.
Anthropomorphism, 29.
Attention, 79, 83.
Authority, 66 f.

BAUDOUIN, 132.
Beauty, 119 f.
Birth, 140.

CONSCIENCE, 114.
Conversion, 145 f.
Cruelty, 108 f.
Curiosity, 62, 79 f.

DEATH, 142,
Doubt, 82.
Dramatisation, 42 f, 54 f.

EDUCATION, 13 f.
Experience, 135 f.
Expression, 87 f.

FEAR, 39, 57 f.
Fetishism, 27.
Freedom, 77 f.
Freud, Sigmund, 33, 87, 128.

"GESTALT" Psychology, 97.

HEAVEN, 145.
Hell, 63.
Hero-worship, 131 f.
Hymns, 118, 122.

IMAGINATION, 45 f.
Imitation, 40 f.
Immortality, 143.
Infancy, 33, 149.
Inferiority-complex, 61, 128, 142
Interest, 84 f.

JEALOUSY, 141.
Jung, C. G., 128.

LOVE, 127 f.
Lying, 47 f, 109 f.

MEMORY, 90 f.
Missionary-Teaching, 113 f.
Montessori, Dr Maria, 49, 87, 119.
Morality, 101 f.
Myths, 28, 52.

NEGATIVISM, 35.

OBEDIENCE, 68 f.
Original Sin, 21 f.

PHANTASY, 48 f.
Play, 42 f, 54 f.
Prayer, 123 f.
Projects, 136 f.
Psychology and Education, 17 f.
Punishment, 72 f.

INDEX

Recapitulation-Theory, 24.
Religion of Children, 20 f.
Repression, 60, 150.
Reverence, 125.
Ritual, 30 f.

Selfishness, 110.
Sex, 141.
Society and the Child, 104 f. 111.
Soul, The, 144.
Stories, 47, 49, 53.
Suggestion, 34 f.

Will, 115.
Worship, 117 f.

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN
BY THE EDINBURGH PRESS, 9 AND 11 YOUNG STREET, EDINBURGH

STUDENT CHRISTIAN MOVEMENT

THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

By HELEN WODEHOUSE, D.Phil., Professor of Education in the University of Bristol. 3s. net; paper, 2s. net

"This is a really inspiring handbook. It should be in the hands of all who are beginning to teach Scripture in the home or in the school. Even those who have taught for years may find a fresh spring of life in its suggestions."—*Times Literary Supplement.*

EVERYDAY PRAYERS

Second Edition. 2s. 6d. net

"A collection of prayers primarily for use by those in charge of schools, clubs, Bible classes and young people's services. They are concerned with all that relates to the life of young people, and will be found to render a real service to those who desire to make the united prayer time a reality."—*Times Educational Supplement.*

PRAYERS OF THE KINGDOM 6d. net

This booklet should be used in conjunction with *Everyday Prayers.* It is intended for use by the boys and girls themselves and contains an introduction on *How to Pray* by Canon E. S. Woods, and a selection of suitable prayers from *Everyday Prayers* including the section "For Corporate Use."

THE QUIET ADVENTURE

A Book for Boys about Prayer. By E. A. WILLIS, B.Sc. 2s. net

CREATION STORIES OF GENESIS AND THEIR RELATION TO MODERN THOUGHT

By A. GORDON JAMES, author of *Personal Immortality*, etc. 4s. net; paper, 2s. 6d. net

"There is frankness and sincerity in his treatment of these stories. He sees those ancients were grappling, even as men must to-day, with the tremendous problems of life and death, sin and suffering, and he finds in their attempt to interpret the purpose behind the universe profound lessons and eternal truth."—*Western Mail.*

MEN, WOMEN AND GOD

A Discussion of Sex Questions from the Christian Point of View. By A. HERBERT GRAY, D.D., with an Appendix on "Some of the Physiological Facts" by A. CHARLES E. GRAY, M.D.
Sixth Edition. 4s. net; paper, 3s. net

"This book can be placed in the hands of young people of either sex, and there are few such, few married people and fewer parents, who would not receive from it counsel helpful in the highest degree."—*Glasgow Herald.*

32 RUSSELL SQUARE, LONDON, W.C.1

Princeton Theological Seminary Libraries
1 1012 01237 4536

Date Due

Ap 4 '38
FACULTY
Ja 27 '47
NO 8 - '50
DE 21 '50

Wilson-
Child Psy. & Rel. ed.

D – Ch. ed